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NUMBER TWENTY \$2.00 JUNE/JULY 1983

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Around Australia Feature-The Overlanders

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Available from all leading Cycle Dealers.

Freewheeling

Number Twenty June/July 1983

"IF I CAN JUST BEAT
BIRTLES' FRUSTRATION
TO SYDNEY RECORD OF
31 DAYS PERHAPS THEN
I SHALL WIN EILEEN'S
HEART!"



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The readers column

Cover photo: Mountain bikes in Hawkesbury sandstone country north of Sydney. These bikes are destined to become a strong influence on the adult recreational touring and commuting scene. Road test page 37. Illustration this page: This illustration by new contributing artist Phil Somerville captures the spirit of the overlanders featured in this issue and starting on page 6.

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Classifieds

Listed below are just some of the headings offered in the new *Freewheeling* readers classifieds. Rates are as follows (Note price reduction from last issue) \$6 per 25 words or less. \$0.10 for each additional word. Payment with order please.

Readers Ads

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Shogun 2001 18-speed tourer. 23" Mangalloy D/B frame, Deore components throughout. Aero rims, Q/R hubs etc, plus alloy racks and Karrimor panniers. All extras spares, tools. Cost over \$800. Only 6 months old. Urgent sale hence — \$450 o.n.o. (02) 387 4467.

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Your advertisement will be seen by over 12,000 readers, their friends and fellow cyclists nationwide. For details of full list of headings write to **Classified Ad Dept.** Freewheeling Box K26 Haymarket 2000.

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NEW SOUTH WALES

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New from USA the Ampec Belt Beacon visible for over 2 miles. Wear it on you or mount it on your bike. Available by mail order \$19.50 + \$1.50 Post and Packing per unit from H & L Imports 2073 Nepean Hwy, Rye Vic, 3941.

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The Num-Bum Protector. A sheepskin bicycle seat cover. Suits standard and racing saddles. Comfortable, durable, washable. \$15.50 plus \$1.50 for post and packing. Money back if not satisfied. Send cheque or money order to C & N Locker, The Travellers Rest, Cooma NSW 2630.

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Freewheeling is now accepting classified advertisements from Australian Bicycle dealers. Your advertisement will be read by our 12000 readers nationwide. Ideal for Mail Order dealers as well.

Rates: Per issue 25 words or less \$6.25. \$0.20 for each additional word. Minimum 4 issues. Six issues 15% discount. Payment in advance with order. Deadlines: August/September, 8 July; October/November, 9 September; December/January, 18 November.

Mail to Classified Ad Dept. Freewheeling BOX K26, HAYMARKET 2000.

National Bike Events Calendar

JULY

10 July Sunday Combined Touring Club Meet at Churchill National Park. Now an annual event this ride is the one which brings all the clubs together. Bring Bar-B-Q lunch. Usually held in raining weather and cool conditions. Definitely for the enthusiast. Contact (03) 66 33509.

OCTOBER

16 October, Sunday. Pedal for Heart. The National Heart Foundations annual bike ride this time with a changed format and venue. The route will follow a circuit based on Centennial Park.

30 October, Sunday. Geelong-Otway Century Tour. An annual event for the enthusiast. Route follows the Great Ocean Road. Organized by the Geelong Touring Club.



NOVEMBER

20 November, Sunday. Freewheeling Sydney to the Gong Bicycle Tour 1983. 1000 riders, 85k. Entry form and full details in August/September issue. Rain or shine. Entries close Friday 4 November.

How to Advertise in this Calendar

The *Freewheeling* National Bike Events Calendar entries are available free to any private or public group wishing to advertise a tour being organized for the general public. Unfortunately, we are not able to list tours for club members only but will mention the important work of clubs in the magazine from time to time and as well publish lists of contacts.

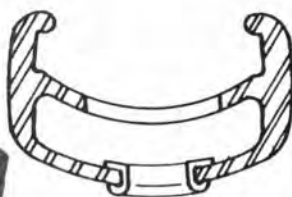
You can notify us of your events by writing to *Freewheeling* National Bike Events Calendar Box K26 Haymarket NSW 2000, or by phoning Warren Salomon on (02) 264-8544 Deadlines are: April/May issue, 11 March; June/July, 6 May; August/September, 8 July; October/November, 9 September;

New Products and Ideas



Plastic Pedals

Japan has gone wild with new pedal designs. Both SR and KKT have released pedals using high density molded polycarbonate shell on the usual steel spindle. The bearing races, also steel, are moulded into the plastic shell. The sheer volume of new pedal designs recently out of Japan is staggering. Most models seem to be in the lower price range and two of the plastic types pictured.



Extra Wide Rims

Tandemists and long distance tourers will note with interest the arrival of the new Mavic E4 modular rim. This rim is 26mm wide and is one of the widest 27 inch alloy rims available. It is suitable for all wide section touring tyres. As with all modular section rims thick wide self adhesive rim tape is recommended to adequately cover the recessed spoke nut holes.

U Lock

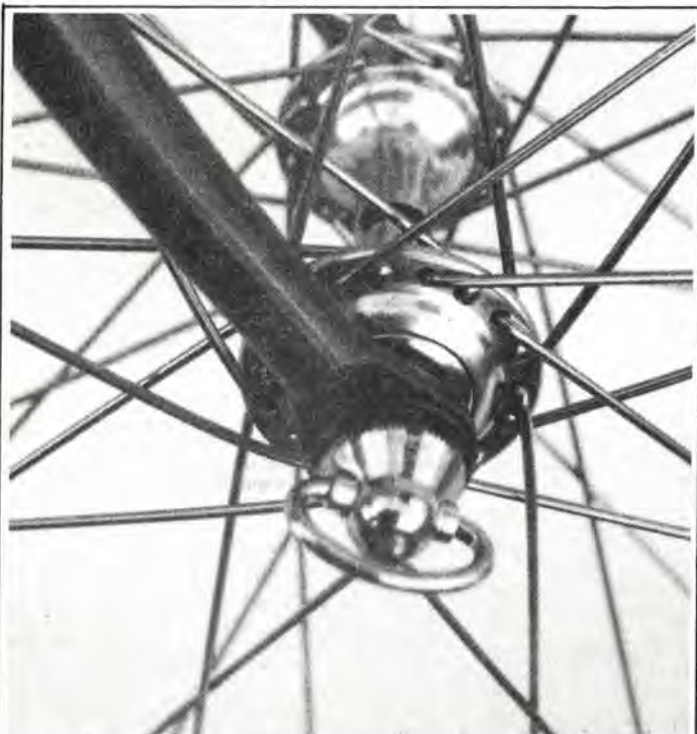
A new comer to the existing range of high security bike

locks is the Master 'U' Lock. This lock features a heavy duty hardened U section 'hasp' which fits through the frame and wheel and bolts the bike to a steel parking meter post or street sign. This type of lock is also reviewed elsewhere in this issue.



New Helmets

From the U.S.A. comes the Skid Lid. This helmet is unique in that it provides an open top for ventilation. The helmet is popular with tourers in the U.S.A. It comes complete with visor attached, chin-strap and chin-cup. A rear vision mirror is also supplied along with excellent fitting instructions. The Skid Lid is made from Lexan as are other popular U.S. helmets.



HOSHI

WINGSTAR SPOKES

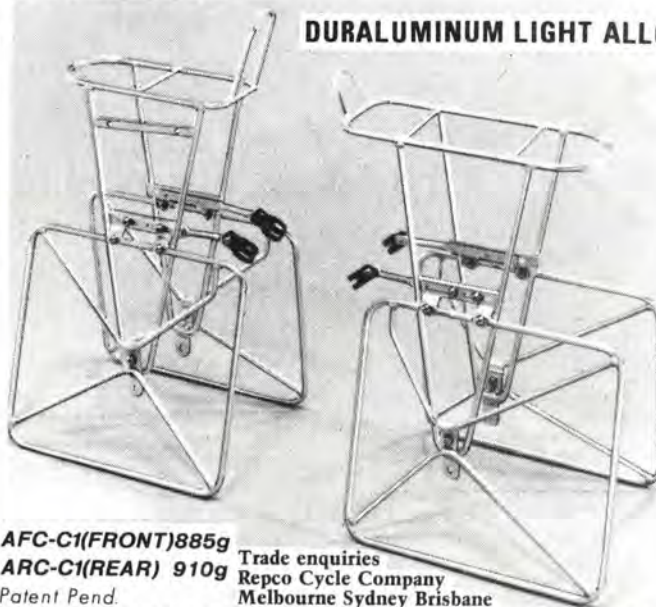
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Kilburn SA

TREADLIES
1 Main St.
Eastwood SA
(08) 271 0212

Before the coming of the railway, the automobile and the airplane, the first and fastest journeys across the Australian land mass were made on that herald of the coming machine age — the bicycle.

Roads were a thing of the future when Arthur Richardson set out ninety years ago to cross the Nullarbor. By 1899 that journey was considered to have lost its 'novelty' and had become insignificant in comparison with the round Australia ride.

In this special feature *Freewheeling* explores the world of the overlander. Old or new, famous and infamous they still ride today.

A photo gallery of the first overlanders from research by Jim Fitzpatrick for his book *The Bicycle and the Bush*.

1. The first overland cycling journey was made before the advent of the pneumatic tyre. Percy Armstrong and R. Craig pedalled together from Croydon in Queensland's Gulf Country to Sydney in 1893. They travelled on 'cushion' tyres covering the 3,200km journey in little over a month.

2. Three years later a series of well publicized rides spanning the continent began and captured the imagination of the public. Arthur Richardson was the first person to cycle the Nullarbor. Later on in 1899-1900 he was first to pedal 'all the way around'.

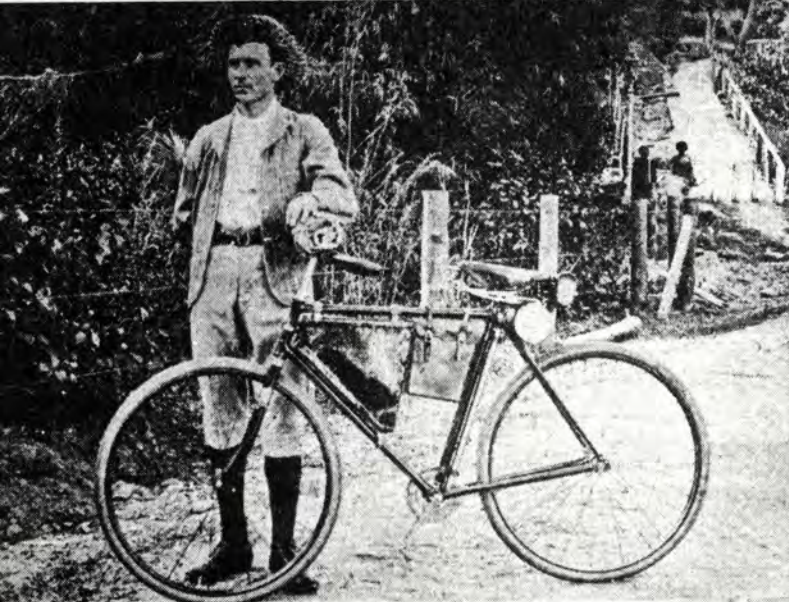
3. Jerome Murif was the first to pedal across central Australia from Adelaide to Darwin in '97. An account of his journey appears in *Freewheeling* 8.

4. The second person to ride around Australia was Alex White. His brother Frank organized the journey but was diverted due to his breaking a crank in the Northern Territory. Alex White failed to better Richardsons time of 243 days for the 19,000km journey. Not a bad time considering there were no roads or bike shops for most of the journey.

5. Albert MacDonald was a record shattering overlander. He covered the 3,154 kilometres from Darwin to Adelaide in only 29 days. It was far quicker than anyone thought possible at the time.



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Freewheeling 7

4
5

1

2



Francis E. Birtles from a picture in the Mitchell Library Sydney. The photo was ostensibly taken in 1912, however the relatively youthful appearance of Birtles suggests that it was in fact taken earlier when he was first embarking on his overland cycling efforts.

The life of Francis Birtles

The Greatest Overlander

Francis Birtles sometime-popular hero in Australia for three decades, took advantage of — and, equally, was the product of — that era when adventure and minor fame were to be found in accomplishing ever quicker and more daring outback journeys on both the bicycle and in that evolving device, the motor car.

Unquestionably a publicity seeker, both for financial and personal reasons, his private life and motives are unclear, fascinating and the subject of much discussion and controversy among those who have met and studied him. In this account of Birtles Jim Fitzpatrick brings to life the character and some of his amazing exploits.

He was an itinerant pedallist and motorist extraordinaire. He cycled across the Nullarbor several times, pedalled halfway around the continent once, around it completely another time, and wrote numerous books and articles of his journeys. In addition, he was involved in one of the earliest cinematographic expeditions in Northern Australia (accomplished by bicycle) and pioneered the outback travel-adventure film.

Retiring from cycling, he turned to the motor car. Among numerous motoring journeys (he claimed to have made over seventy transcontinental crossings by 1928) were the first west-to-east Nullarbor crossing, the crossing of the Stony Desert, Darwin-Sydney and Darwin-Melbourne records, and a survey of a proposed central Australian railway line (later completed by aeroplane). In 1928 he expanded his horizons and completed the first London-Melbourne drive, part of it solo.

He took many photographs on his trips and published a number of articles over the years. His book, *Battle Fronts of Outback* (1935), summarized his travels and adventures; the title suggests something of the 'man-conquers-nature' attitude of his writing and endeavours.

He was born in Fitzroy, Victoria in 1881. After attending a state school he joined the merchant navy as an apprentice at the age of fifteen. Three years later, in

1899, his ship pulled into Cape Town soon after the outbreak of the Boer War. Birtles jumped ship and attempted to join the Australian military, but ended up serving 2½ years in a troop of irregular mounted infantry.

His brief writings on his war experiences tell little. However, they do provide a sample of his descriptions of strange places and events. . . . vultures, gorged to capacity, flopped and rose heavily on lazily beating wings against the yellow dawn. The air that we breathed as we rode on, mile after mile, was polluted with the odour of week-old, jackal-torn carcasses of horses which had met with cruel lingering deaths in a disastrous running skirmish of several days before. Some of their former veldt riders were now sleeping peacefully beneath scattered earth mounds. Later, he referred to a clash with Boers. . . . near to where we lay in the hollow, all was quiet. Cautiously I peered. What was the use of shooting when I could see no living target? A man about twenty yards away from me started to play about. He rolled over on his back, doubled up his knees and, like a kitten, pawed with two grabbing hands at his haversack, which, in the scramble, had slipped around and was now packed on his stomach. He rolled over again, and then lay still.

In mid-1902 he briefly returned to Australia. However, he was shortly back to South Africa, where he served two years as a mounted police officer

The Overlanders



in the Transvaal. Writing of those experiences some thirty years later, he recounted that — *I have arrested a black man in the morning for owning more wives than he'd paid for; a yellow man at noon, for deserting from the mines; and a white man at night, for preaching sedition . . . I have gone out to arrest a rebel Dutch man . . . We found the nest, scattered it, captured the ringleader, and dug up a buried cannon and ammunition.*

Unfortunately, Francis Birtles was prone to exaggerate. In analyzing later events which can be cross-checked with newspaper, archival and other accounts, it is obvious that facts are forgotten and mis-ordered, if not made up. In essence, it is hard to assess where essay leaves off and embellishment begins.

An edge of racism runs through his writing as well. He referred to the Black African miners on the Rand as 'country-bred niggers', and commented on 'a great problem . . . the black risings'. He noted that — *For every native rising that the world hears of, a dozen occur, though the Press make light of them or suppress news of them altogether. The black problem is one of the questions of the age, and its solution is uncertain; But he offered one piece of advice: . . . if the white rulers govern the black people with a slack hand, big trouble will certainly come.*

Birtles eventually left the South African police force. Some accounts

suggest it was as a result of contracting blackwater fever. Birtles indicated that he simply quit when his contract expired; he had no desire 'to make police duty my life's profession'. In any case, in his years in South Africa he gained experiences and developed interests that profoundly influenced the remaining course of his life. For one thing he had acquired extensive bush survival skills. For another he had undertaken some cycling excursions that had demonstrated the value of the bicycle for travel in harsh, arid environments. As well, he experimented with photography and achieved a degree of expertise. It 'occurred to me that my own country offered opportunities for hard living and

adventurous exploits'. Consequently, he returned to Australia to combine photography, cycling, motor cars, and bush travel in a series of journeys that occupied him for the next thirty years.

Birtles disembarked at Fremantle. On Boxing Day, 1905, he pedalled out of Perth for the eastern states. He intended to ride northeast from the goldfields via Alice Springs, but intense heat and scarcity of water turned him back. Instead, he headed south and then east across the Nullarbor. However, he was not the first to do the trip on bicycle, for men had been riding the route for a decade; one had in fact averaged 103 miles per day between Perth and Adelaide in 1898.

For the next six years Birtles rode his bicycle about the continent, photographed its wonders — and himself standing among them — and wrote about his adventures. His first book, *Lonely Lands* (1909), recounted his exploits on a trip around the eastern half of Australia. Its 224 pages included 85 photographs and set the pattern for his later writings — plenty of pictures of strange things and isolated places, together with a liberal tale of the difficulties and battles he had in completing the journey.

He stated that he cycled across the continent seven times and around it twice. The records are not clear, but in any case he became the most peripatetic overlander in Australian cycling history. The travels are remarkable for the sheer physical effort and mental determination involved in pedalling so many tens of thousands of miles of bush. He wrote several articles for a variety of magazines between 1910 and 1912, with such titles as *Through the Unknown Territory* and *Across Australia by Camel Pad and Cattle Track*. The money from these helped finance his travels. As well, an agreement with Anthony Hordern and Sons proved mutually beneficial; they provided a 'Universal' bicycle in exchange for him endorsing the machine. A sketch of Birtles riding it was included in their catalogue.

During his cycling era, Birtles helped pioneer the outback adventure film. The Gaumont Company sent a photographer, Richard Primmer, to travel with him between Sydney and Darwin in 1911. It was an epic trip in terms of logistics alone. Besides food, water and personal and camping gear, they carried still, stereoscopic and cinematographic cameras, plates and film, and developing tanks and fluids. A contemporary observer estimated that between them the men carried about 250 pounds of gear.

The film was released in Sydney, under the title *Across Australia*, in May 1912. It was 3 000 feet long and included scenes of emus, crocodile hunting, sugar cane growing, Thursday Island pearling, and shark fishing. It was put on in conjunction with a children's essay competition. Contemporary accounts lauded the film, 'showing places never before seen by a Sydney audience'; it played to a 'large audience which thronged the Lyceum'. In July it ran in Melbourne and Adelaide.

However, Birtles' film debut was in fact three months earlier. He was photographed arriving in Sydney on 1 February, 1912, on his last overland cycling ride. Fittingly, it was capped by a Fremantle-Sydney record; he had

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it has no equal for —
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WHAT "DUNLOPS" WILL STAND!

The illustration depicts F. Birtles' cycle — loaded up with 150 lbs. of luggage — on his trip around Australia. The cycle is leaning against rabbit-proof fence, with the front wheel in the Northern Territory and back wheel in Queensland. It is a striking fact that "Dunlops" are always chosen when RELIABILITY and DURABILITY ARE ESSENTIAL.

— Beware of Imitations. —

This Dunlop advertisement was inspired by Birtles' rides. It is a classic of Australian advertising and uses one of Birtles' photos taken in 1910 at the rabbit fence border between Queensland and the Northern Territory.

covered 3 175 miles in 31 days. Two days later his finish was shown as part of a Gaumont gazette film.

In 1912 he took up motoring and travelled about the bush making three more films in the next eight years. The first, *Into Australia's Unknown*, was begun with Frank Hurley. However, Frank left to accompany Shackleton on an Antarctic expedition and Birtles finished it alone. It was released in January 1915. The following year another film *Across Australia in the Track of Burke and Wills*, re-traced the ill-fated expedition's route.

After Sir Ross and Sir Keith Smith completed their England-Australia flight in 1919, Francis Birtles travelled their Darwin-Sydney leg by motorcar. The film of the journey, *Through Australian Wilds and Across the Track of Ross Smith*, was released in various capital cities between July 1919 and February 1920, to little success. Birtles was trying to scoop his former colleague, Frank Hurley, who had flown with the Smiths from Darwin to Sydney, but had not yet released a film of it. The reviews of Birtles' film were unenthusiastic. The attempt to tie his earth-bound adventure travels to the aura of the great air journey simply did not come off well.

Birtles had taken up motoring in 1912 with the same penchant as he had with bicycles — he headed for the outback and records. His first car was a 10 horsepower, single-cylinder Brush. With Syd Ferguson accompanying him, he made the first west-east crossing of the continent. An *Australasian* writer observed that: *The car and its contents presented a strange appearance on the road. The body of the vehicle was almost hidden under nearly half of a ton of outfit, including tent, sandmats, shovels, food-boxes, water-bags, guns, a cinematograph camera, and Birtles' bicycle.* Upon arrival from Perth there was a mantle of dust 'over the car, baggage and motorists'. They reached Sydney, via Broken Hill, in 28 days, 1 hour and 52 minutes. However, it was only three days faster than he had pedalled across, six months before; and the cycle ride had involved longer route, via Adelaide and Melbourne.

He made innumerable motor journeys about Australia, into extremely isolated areas and through some harsh conditions. Some of them were for the express purpose of making films, others for whatever pleasures, panacea or results he wanted. He was accompanied by various companions, and carried his bicycle as 'a lifeboat'.

His experiences and publicity resulted in a commission in 1921 to survey an overland railway route between Adelaide and Darwin for the Prime Minister's Department. With Ray Fry he reached the Katherine rail head after three months. With 80 gallons of petrol aboard they turned back south. Near Elsey Station the car virtually exploded. The car, cameras, plates, cine-film, possessions, and survey notes had been destroyed, and Birtles and Fry were burnt. They were taken to the Inland Mission hospital at Maranbay tinfields. Several months later they returned south by steamer.

Birtles completed the survey by air. He flew in a De Havilland biplane,

piloted by Frank Briggs, with George Bailey as mechanic. In his inimitable writing style, he described his 'companionship with a new tribe of youthful, capable men, strapped in and controlling a balanced and roaring dragon of the air'. They left Melbourne and, via Adelaide, reached Alice Springs. After two weeks in the area they returned to Melbourne. For a man who had spent 16 years pedalling and driving about the bush, the trip was a thrill. His account of it represents some of his most eloquent — and relatively unembellished — writing: *'I saw Melbourne mistily dissolving into a series of dull coloured squares, all held together by little streaks of streets, and railway*



Above: This photo taken over two decades after Birtles began touring about Australia, shows a leather-skinned man, tough, wiry, and much worn, in contrast to early cycle-trip photos. Below: This photo of the Brush car was made during the first west-east motor crossing of the Nullarbor, in 1912. The effort to show the harshness of some of the travelling conditions was a hallmark of his travel pictures.

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lines'. He concluded with the simple and powerful observation that they had reached Melbourne 'from the far distant heart of Australia in fifteen hours flying time'.

By 1924 Birtles made another film, *Australia's Lonely Lands*. It was longer than several of the previous films, and Birtles appeared in person at its showings. However, it received only a lukewarm reception. The audiences were cooling to the straight adventure-travel films, partly from the number having been shown over the past 12 years, and partly because increasingly sophisticated film-goers desired more plot.

Subsequently Birtles began work on his last film, *Coorab*. Although released in 1929, there is some doubt as to exactly when it was filmed. Ina Bertrand, Australian film historian, suggests that it was possibly a composition of extracts from his earlier films and unused footage. There is no clear record of him having made a separate trip to film it, and numerous scenes from *Coorab* fit those described from his earlier films. The difficulty in resolving the matter lies in the fact that *Coorab* is the only Birtles film for which a copy has survived. Like so many early Australian films, prints and negatives seemed to quickly disappear.

His motoring continued unabated. In 1926 he drove his Bean car, named the 'Sundowner', to yet more records, including Darwin-Sydney in only seven days. He financed his travels partly through his writings, films and sales of photographs. He also obtained support from various companies, which he assiduously pursued by keeping a high public profile. He effectively and continually utilised the combination of publicity, daring and accomplishment to finance the next effort. The technique had its risks, however: 'All my life I'd been a battler . . . stroking a reflecting chin over the problem of how to pay my way. I'd been broke a dozen times'.

Nonetheless, he set his sights abroad and sought support for a drive from London to Melbourne. Shell, Dunlop and others contributed to the journey. After an abortive initial effort, he finally left London in September 1927, in the 'Sundowner'. Both his personal and newspaper accounts suggest that it was indeed an exciting and difficult trip; he was hospitalised in India, and threatened by bandits, among other things. His observation of people in Baghdad is pure Birtles: *A swarm of guides and medicants surrounded the car. I recognised them as the descendants of*

the Forty Thieves, but they had multiplied exceedingly!

His rate of travel ranged from the 'certified top speed' of 80 miles per hour, to a standstill; in southeast Asia he spent days winching the car up and down hills and mountain-sides as he manoeuvred along muddy animal tracks through the tropical forests. He finally reached Melbourne in mid-1928, the first man to make the journey (he had a companion for part of it). The 'Sundowner' was given to the Federal Government, where it is still held, awaiting the time when it can be displayed in a national museum.

He was also a pioneer of a minor facet of Australian culture — the wearing of shorts by men. The earliest photographs of him, both his own and those appearing in newspapers and magazines, showed him in them, a practice he apparently brought back from his service in South Africa. It was some decades before the concept caught on among other Australian workers and bush travellers. For Francis Birtles, it was a then-eccentric touch that graced the illustrations of his adventures.

Francis Birtles was an Australian classic. As he said, 'I had an outback Australian's belief in my ability to meet whatever contingencies might arise'. But like

so many kindred spirits, Birtles did not await contingencies, he created them. He established several legacies, but few common reminders of them now exist. Of his five films, a print remains only of the last. Of his two books, copies are scarce. His dozen or so articles lie entombed in now-defunct magazines stored in libraries. And his name triggers memories only in the minds of those now-elderly Australians who once followed his adventures through his writings, films, personal appearances and newspaper accounts.

By 1935, when his second book, *Battle Fronts of Outback*, was published, he had discovered and sold a gold mine, retired to a life of financial security, and had recently married Nea McCutcheon. At the conclusion of his book he wrote: . . . *that is my story. Like most yarns it has a postscript. I am now enjoying being a man of means and of leisure. I've got some of the things I've always wanted — the sort of things a man of my tastes dreams of owning when he hasn't a cracker. There's a motor caravan that has cost me as much as I could have lived on for five or six years in the old days. And there's a little fleet of sporty two-seater models fitted with every possible refinement. I've got a photographic and cinematographic outfit that couldn't be improved upon. It includes everything, and everything is of the*



This picture was taken near the end of Birtles' cycling career, when he was using an Anthony Hordern 'Universal'. The heavily laden machine and weatherbeaten appearance of the man represented the requirements, and effects, of a round-Australia effort. The dog accompanied him.

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best. And all the while I am planning to go back. But he never did, in the same way as before. His caravan journeys were but a pale reflection of the difficulties and achievements of his earlier travels. And the material goods, 'of the best', were neither the objective nor essence of his life.

His unceasing travels suggest that he had a fundamental need to be on the move, that he was possessed of an itch that required continual scratching. In the process he both recorded and contributed to the change and ethos of an era. As he recognised in 1935, the outback was a different place from when he first pedalled about it, thirty years before. The motor car had brought 'better chances in case of sickness' and had widened the bush residents' mental and physical horizons. The pedal wireless enabled quick communication and the airplane brought medical assistance. For those not part of the bush, Birtles could take pride in the fact that his 'expeditions with pen and camera had helped to make the interior a reality to the general consciousness'.

Francis Birtles died of heart disease in New South Wales in July 1941. Within seven months such hitherto-exotic Australian names as Darwin, Broome, Derby and Wyndham would be swept into national and international consciousness along with those of Pearl Harbour, Bataan, and Singapore. The passing of Francis Birtles marked not only that of a man but of an era.

“

August 8, 1911*

Camped on Katherine River. Crocodile crawled out on to a sandbank in the middle of the stream; big barramundi in his jaws. Fired a bullet at him; he dropped the fish and dived into the water. I swam across, towed my future meal to the camp; grilled about eight pounds of it for tea, salted the rest. Sweet dreams.

”

*Quotes used throughout our Overlander section are from Birtles' diary of his final overland cycle journey published in the magazine *The Lone Hand* June 1912.

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With the long distance cyclist

"If you fancy cycle touring, why choose Australia?" This question and others are posed by journalist Jim Pollard in his study of long distance cyclist Murray Guest.

Jim writes from an 'outsiders' viewpoint and takes us closer to the reasons behind the whys and wherefores of the long distance cyclist.

Murray Guest is a close friend. We went to school together then shared a house for several years. He rode around Sydney on a bicycle and did about 100 kilometres each week, to and from Teachers' College. I knew he was "right into it" because he had bought the special clip-on shoes, helmet and woollen shorts. Nevertheless I was shocked, if not stunned, when he said he planned to ride around Australia.

Murray, or "Jawbone" as he is known, had pedalled around Tasmania with a group of six friends the previous Christmas and I would have liked to have had the time to join him there. It would have made his next "mission" easier to comprehend.

I left Sydney in June to catch up with Murray thinking there was something "very wrong" with him.

It's hard to fathom why anyone would want to ride around Australia on a pushbike. Seeing your own country is fine and commendable . . . but on a bike?! It's a long enough journey in a car — close on 25 000 kilometres for Murray. Why did he want to make it doubly difficult by doing it on a bike? You wonder how a man can desire to subject himself to all that effort.

Bike touring is not everybody's kettle of fish. For many, like myself, it conjures up images of physical strain; a rider battling a driving headwind, or a steep hill, while cars and trucks hurtle by inches from you.

I have not pushed pedals more than five kilometres in any one direction. That would be a quarter of an hour's effort for Murray; an almost insignificant interlude — yet for me, and I imagine for most people, it would repre-

sent an exhausting and arduous task. A burden and a bother. Most people shudder at the thought of the physical effort involved. Such exertion is foreign to modern comforts.

A car can protect you from the elements, transport you in four times the speed and twice the comfort. I could not think of one good reason for riding that far on a pushbike.

If you do fancy cycle touring, why choose Australia? Our country doesn't seem as suitable for the sport as say, Britain, or Europe. We suffer very hot dry summers, long, lonely stretches between inland towns, and the miles separating them are covered in sparse semi-desert vegetation.

None of this deterred 22 year-old Murray. He left our Kingsford home in mid-March and headed north. I met him in Darwin in early July and spent a month driving as his "support car".

In the three months prior to our drunken reunion Murray went as far north in Queensland as Cairns, spending a week's break with friends at Byron Bay and Bundaberg along the way. After another week touring the rainforests and Atherton Tablelands

he turned south to Charters Towers, where a broken sprocket and other bike troubles delayed him for eight days. He had to wait for replacement parts to be mailed from Sydney.

From there it was a long hard slog into the Centre; Charters Towers to Alice Springs was a lonely section for him. A complete contrast to the lush wet north . . . desolate, flat and bare. He covered big distances across that "boring" countryside.

I was in Sydney when he rang "home" from Richmond, halfway between Townsville and Mt Isa. He said he had ridden 250 kilometres that day. There was a tinge of pride in his

voice, and he said he had a sore bum. 'Serves you right' I thought and told him he was a bloody idiot. Later he told me he only did about 100 kilometres the next day . . . "to recover". It sounded like some sort of joke but he was deadly serious. Shortly after he rode 310 kilometres in one day, from Barry Caves to Tennant Creek. Sixteen hours from dawn till after dusk just pedalling.

In Alice Springs he had a welcome rest. A week off to catch a bus down to see Ayers Rock. From thence it was north to Darwin and warmer temperatures each day. Mosquitoes replaced the chill in the night.

In Katherine he met Wayne Holmes. Wayne, 32, from Perth, surprised him. He too was cycling around Australia but, rode in thongs, something I was made to understand was taboo. He broke another rule in wearing no shirt, and his back was well-browned from hours under the sun.

Wayne had left Perth only two weeks after learning how to ride a bike, and his was a cheap one, costing just \$200. Murray's cost \$1100 and was custom-made. Its green frame had two crossbars, which he said was for extra strength. Together they rode to Darwin; Murray the bigger and faster of the two, and Wayne with his unusual extras, as jaffle-iron and folding seat.

Murray and Wayne not only shared a mutual attraction to pedalling vast distances, they also had a similar desire for gargantuan amounts of beer. Their personalities contradicted my image of the touring cyclist, whom I assumed, rather narrowly, were classified with the fitness fanatics and nature and health food "freaks".

Wayne left for Perth and Murray and I went east, side-tracking to see the Kakadu National Park. It was hard work for him there but he never begrudged the dust cloud from passing cars or the corrugated and sandy tracks which slowed him to half his normal speed and clogged up his 18 gears. Such is the natural beauty and scenic magnificence of the Park. It was a detour he never regretted; the birdlife, aboriginal paintings, saltwater crocodiles — a delight that overcame the 300 kilometres of dirt road.

We returned to the main north-south drag, the Stuart Highway, at Pine Creek. Murray was relieved to get back onto the bitumen. He was dirty and sweaty, his body jarred from the constant bumping and bouncing over rocks.

I marvelled at the novelty of the situation. Initially it was quite thrilling. I was part of an adventure, but, it wasn't mine — I was driving. My incomprehension eased. Slowly, hardened opinions of his "insanity" softened. It was interesting, different.

Each morning he left the tent with a gag like: "see you at the next town. . . but don't be long, you know how I hate waiting for you." Then he'd ride off, just on dawn, wearing his clip-on shoes, faded T-shirt, dark glasses and sun-visor.

Some days I'd drive up and stop about half a kilometre behind him. I watched intently, his broad frame powering on relentlessly with not a human or evidence of one in sight. There was persistence and determination. I felt proud for him, his goal.

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Then I'd drive up and give him a cool drink. His one regret about the trip was that he couldn't fit an esky onto the bike. He'd down a litre and a half of cordial and continue.

Sometimes you could drive up and ask him where we were. He always knew.

"About 55 kilometres past Kununurra." He could tell by just looking at his watch. He did 20 kilometres an hour, almost unfailingly. Soon I gave up challenging him — he was always right.

In every town and pub we went through there was questioning. People were keen to interrogate him, ask him why. Some said they admired him and wished they had the guts to do it. But it struck me a lot of them thought he was crazy. His reasons weren't always accepted.

"I want to see my country . . . I want to see Australia — all of it — first hand," Murray says. He is sitting under a small tree, talking to an elderly woman.

We are at the isolated settlement that is Turkey Creek, halfway between Wyndham and Halls Creek in northern Western Australia. There is a small store, two petrol pumps and very little else. The woman had spied him ride up and the curiosity was too great.

"Yes, but why did you decide to cycle?" she asks.

"It is the BEST way to see the country. One way you can really get the feel of your surroundings," he replies.

Her eyebrows raise, but the expression is unchanged, still unsatisfied.

Murray has just ridden 150 kilometres to find a store that doesn't sell takeaway beer. The next pub is another 150 kilometres down the highway, so, he is a little flustered; can't be bothered going into his explanation "ritual".

"There are some people you just can't explain it to," he says as we watch the old woman walk back to her bus. "At least I'm seeing it all while I'm still young."

A week earlier I overheard him talking to a young newly-wed couple: "you get the thrill of the landscape, feel the harshness of the desert, the wetness in the rainforests. You are on closer terms with everything around you . . . animals aren't scared away by some noisy engine."

"I'm seeing things I knew about but previously lacked character and life. Now I know and can appreciate so much more — just how much of Australia is desert, each small town I see, not drive by. The geography of all areas has come alive."

Murray studied geography over the last three years, and, will be able to

teach it with conviction after the trip.

He was averaging 150 to 200 kilometres a day but insisted he wasn't fit. I didn't agree — he was carrying 40kg. of gear most days. Fully laden with clothes, tools and 12 litres of water, he could only just lift the bike.

Surprisingly too, he didn't wear a helmet, opting instead for a sun-visor and shades. The glare of the sun bothered him more than the passing cars and road-trains.

"It's more dangerous driving for one day on Sydney's streets than it would be travelling alone on this whole trip," he said.

"Far less cars are zooming past you, and you don't get any of those maniacs who run you off the road, 'cos they're in such a rush they couldn't give a damn about you."

"Out here in the country people are so friendly. So many have stopped and given me a drink or a piece of fruit. And, everybody waves. The ones you

remember are those that don't," he states emphatically.

Still, things did get boring. If I thought a stretch of road was monotonous I hated to think about Murray. Sitting reading a book under a tree, I'd wait . . . wonder how he felt.

"How was it?" I'd ask as he pulled up by the car.

"Not bad. Saw this really interesting sandshoe about 60 kays back".

It was highs and lows he said. Days of depression and, exhilaration. "Sometimes I felt I was getting nowhere — others I'd be fired up, full of purpose."

He reckoned when he finished he would be one of perhaps six people who cycled right around the country this year. Some people would wonder how you'd get six to do it — I know I wouldn't do it. The thing is, though, I remember the country I saw in that month better than any other area after driving around.



66

August 16, 1911*

Riding fast along a cattle track overtook wild bull going down to water. He kept running ahead. I could not get past. Suddenly he stopped short, dropped his head and charged. I sprinted off the track, got past onto my course. Did not have time to look behind. I beat him easily on the 'straight'.

August 29, 1911*

Still travelling along the freshly made cattle track, which would take me down to the Kimberley foothills. Track very dusty and worn down to foot deep channel. Run over a small spinifex snake, which bit me on the front of the right leg. Pinched the flesh, cut piece out. Leg puffy and blue; not hurting much; let blood run freely; feel very thirsty.

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The Overlanders



Tour to the top

by R. Hume

'You won't make it mate,' said the driver of a Toyota as we got off our bikes and walked into the general store to get a cool drink. Here we were, myself, Matt, Greg and Andrew. At the township of Coen a relic of the early mining days with mullock heaps still visible in the hills surrounding the town. We were halfway to the most northern tip of Australia, Cape York.

We camped that night beside the Coen River and remembered back to when we had camped on the Palmer River the *River of Gold* of those early prospectors 100 years ago, where the North Queensland gold rush all began. Now there was only a dusty licenced cafe-museum to remind visitors of its former greatness.

Reminders of the aboriginal inhabitants are to be found in the spectacular rock art galleries of the Quinkan country surrounding Laura.

The most accessible of these are Split Rock galleries just off the Peninsula Development Road, 12kms south of Laura. The paintings include turtles, fish, goannas, crocodiles and Quinkans themselves — these being spirits of the night that come out and feast on human kidney fat.

We had climbed the Geike range and crossed the Great Divide four times. There is only one cleared track to 'the top'. The two lane bitumen ended at the first pronounced climb over the ranges 23km north of the Wolfam mine and hotel at Mt Carbine. The road winds through creeks, washaways, sandstone gullies, flood plains, tea-tree scrub and bushfires. Fires apparently come later in the dry and we only saw evidence of one recently.

We left Mareeba on the 2nd June, after catching the train from Cairns to beat the fires and ensure that most of the creeks held water. These soon dry up as the dry season progresses, although the main rivers and some creeks still run. We were also trying to avoid the plague of 4-wheel-drives that descend upon the Cape York peninsula in the dry season.

The road north of the Weipa turn off is virtually two wheel-ruts following the telegraph line. First we turned off to Weipa to meet another friend, John, who flew up from Cairns. Splashes of vivid colour from Bougainvillia vine greeted us along with road signs reading *Stop in time* referring to the right of way of the 50 tonne dump trucks between the bauxite deposits and Australia's most northern railway to the port.

After getting supplies we headed west for a look round Weipa and on to Batavia Downs cattle station. There Greg's broken rack was repaired. (It broke along the road to Batavia Downs.)

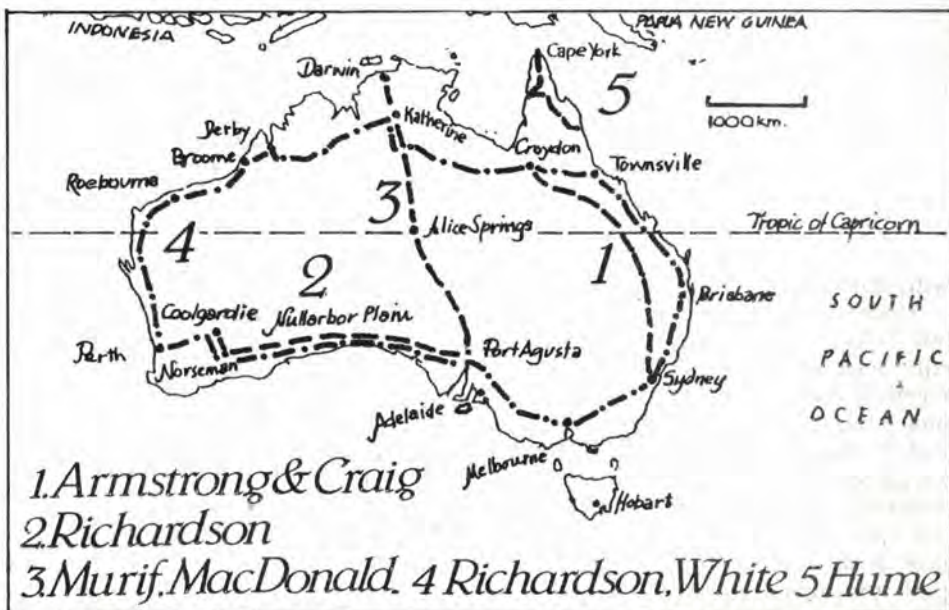
We spent the night beside Lydia Creek and started again on our journey. With levelling terrain we crossed the Wenlock River with its telegraph station on the northern bank. Between here and the Jardine, the Dulhunty river and the numerous creek crossings were picturesque spots with their crystal clear waters and surrounding gallery rainforests. The road itself was seemingly endless sand, broken only by ironstone ridges. These sandy heath covered parts of the peninsula are the source of its most famous river the Jardine. We camped the night here and started on the last leg of our 6 week journey. Through the Jardine swamps and onto Bamaga then to the very tip itself.

The road from Bamaga to the tip passes through tropical jungle. Standing at the tip we couldn't but help think of that driver from Coen if he could only see us now.

From Bamaga we flew to Thursday Island. It was a step back in time with its tree lined main street and open air picture theatre displaying signs of better days. After a journey by ferry back to Horne Island, Thursday Island's airport, we left Greg and Andrew behind and boarded a Fokker to fly back to Cairns.



Above: The road north follows the telegraph line and crosses a series of ironstone ridges with low flat open forest in between. Below: The road in places is little more than a rutted 4-wheel drive track. Map below: Shows route taken by author and a few of the famous overland cycling journeys late last century.



The Overlanders



All the way round

Long distance cyclist Murray Guest estimates that he was one of perhaps six people who pedalled the 19,500km around the Australian land mass the year he made his journey. In 1978 Chris Murphy set out to do it on his own. This is the story of his ride.

Photographs this page. Top: Chris Murphy all packed up and ready to go. His journey took him far from the comforts of suburban Melbourne. Left: Circum-Australia cyclists meet. Chris Murphy and the irrepressible Albert Schofield aged 70, cycling round at 160km per day average. Right: Tracks through the sand on earth form road in the far north-west. 'Hitting sand took all the speed off the bike. If the stretch of sand was too wide there was nothing for it but to push and wrestle the 50 kilograms of bike and get out of it.' Opposite page: Frank White (in light coloured jersey) is 'sent off' by this crowd in 1898 on his sixty two day journey between Perth WA and Rockhampton, Queensland. Once there he rested a few days and rode back again completing the 14,500km round trip in five months.



Outside our house on March 7th 1978 a little group was gathered in the early sunshine. It was a fine warm day with Melbourne's summer making one of its late runs. Good-byes were exchanged and then I set off. Before me lay 19,200 km of cycling and a great amount and variety of experience. For somewhat over six months the pedals would lead me around the Australian continent, through towns and places I had never heard of before.

After 2,500 km I had made Sydney, detouring through Portland and Mildura, Wagga and Bathurst (adding 1,500 km to the shortest route possible, but striking new ground I had never covered before). From Sydney I followed Highway One up to Brisbane and on to Cairns. Returning to Townsville, it was on again to Mt Isa, Alice Springs and Darwin; from Darwin, back to Katherine and out west, down the coast, through Broome, Geraldton and on to Perth. After venturing into the Southwest, Esperance and Norseman I found myself in Adelaide with the Nullarbor behind me and a 'little' way to go. Mt Gambier, Geelong and finally Melbourne saw the trip ended and the pedals stilled.

Looking back now there is no doubt that the trip was a tremendous experience. It was a once-in-a-lifetime thing. You have to go when you have

the urge and the opportunity. Once it is done it is never forgotten. Yet, sitting at home in comfort, going through all the daily things of city life, occasionally I wonder what was it really like out there riding day after day? I can flick through slides, or think of memorable events, but what is forgotten are the everyday things: the smells and the sounds. And what was it like waking up each morning? Not just the good mornings, but the awful mornings, or the mornings when I couldn't be bothered. What was it like to start off into a headwind for the umpteenth day running? And, if I remember now, will I be able to in five, ten or fifteen years?

On that first day I couldn't know what to expect; it was a matter of setting off and finding out as it happened.

For some reason, the desire to cycle around Australia had overtaken me. I considered myself a pretty experienced tourer. This trip was altogether different to those I had done, yet it seemed to grow out of the others; to be a logical extension of them.

With a bike of over 45kg and everything that could be thought of to make the trip cheap and comfortable, I bounced over the familiar Melbourne roads. Even the longest journey starts with a single step, but I couldn't help thinking how puny that first step can seem. That was how I felt on that initial morning: anticipa-



66

September 6, 1911*

Blowing roaring gale from west. Torrents of dust in a blinding, choking, yellow stream. Atmosphere like a furnace. Camp at foot of some basalt cliffs. Plenty of "organ grinding" lizards about. Little fellows which run about in a great hurry, stop suddenly, and then work one arm violently around and around — procedure repeated indefinitely.

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tion mixed with trepidation. I didn't know what would happen while I waited until it did. Four days of riding took me to my first breakdown; the end result of that was a bent hub. Hot weather accompanied me to Mildura and then headwind to Griffith. By the time I had battled the Blue Mountains and made Sydney, the work seemed pretty damned hard. The worst of it was yet to come.

Brisbane was only six hundred miles from Sydney, but it seemed the gap would never close. Further bad weather and successive broken spokes added to my fatigue and loneliness. At Grafton I decided to pack it in, having left Melbourne 39 days before.

That was a moment of real despair. It seemed, there and then, that I was defeated. I had had nothing but trouble and looked forward only to more of the same. Somehow, I changed my mind overnight and set off the next day with new resolve; I can't really say why; perhaps it was the prospect of my inglorious homecoming.

As it was, the next day very nearly changed my mind back again. I had a tyre that was seconds away from blowing out, the right crank of my T.A. triple (i.e., the pedal-arm of my chain-set) broke in two, and a crack was discovered in my rear wheel's rim — all in separate incidents. That might seem like an incredible day, but it was not that extraordinary at all. Two more alloy cranks were to bite the dust before Darwin. Things that couldn't have seemed possible to break broke and mechanical trouble was to plague me over the whole journey.

Although it seemed circumstances was battling against it, I did finally make Brisbane. It was a glorious moment when I first caught glimpses of the tall buildings clustered together like monolithic bee-hives. Bumping along on an almost triangular wheel, I realized all at once that I was actually in Brisbane, the target I thought I couldn't reach. I felt a sense of victory beyond all other. I had won the

decisive first round. Much lay ahead, but that was all physical; I had won out over the mental.

I had a good rest in Brisbane and set off only when I was quite ready to do so. In no time I found myself, as the north-bound traveller does, ascending into the mists of North Queensland. Things are and were very different there. The Great South Land ends at Rockhampton; the unblessed find themselves dubbed Southerners and must remember it. Hippies are unwelcome and politics is red rag to a bull. Life slows to a leisurely pace, sugar cane is all about, rivers and terrible bridges abound; hills and forests remind that this really is the tropics. Rain soaks everyone on the outside; pubs do the same on the inside.

Moving out west, the strains of Slim Dusty are on every juke-box. Cows lie sleepy in the dusty shade, or stand stupid at the dusty roadside. Cattle grids clatter out a painful tune and water bores dot the countryside. Road trains become more common and wary car-drivers dive off the narrow bitumen rather than argue with their larger brothers.

Further on, at the border, the sign boldly cries, "This is Nature Territory", even though there isn't a tree in sight. But whatever its beginnings and promises the Northern Territory is altogether unforgettable. From the three-horse races, the rocks, the gorges or the flatness, the MacDonnell Ranges or the tropical north, from hot springs to crusty plains, it is a place of unceasing change and constant interest. The caravanning community is everywhere in abundance, eager to chat and be friendly and the Territorians are never short of a How-do-you-do?

There is only the one main north-south road in the Territory. From some high places it can be seen stretching off over the roll of the horizon. It might go on for miles, the only evidence of civilization in all of a vast panorama. But, however sparsely populated the place is, you can't help but think it has real character.

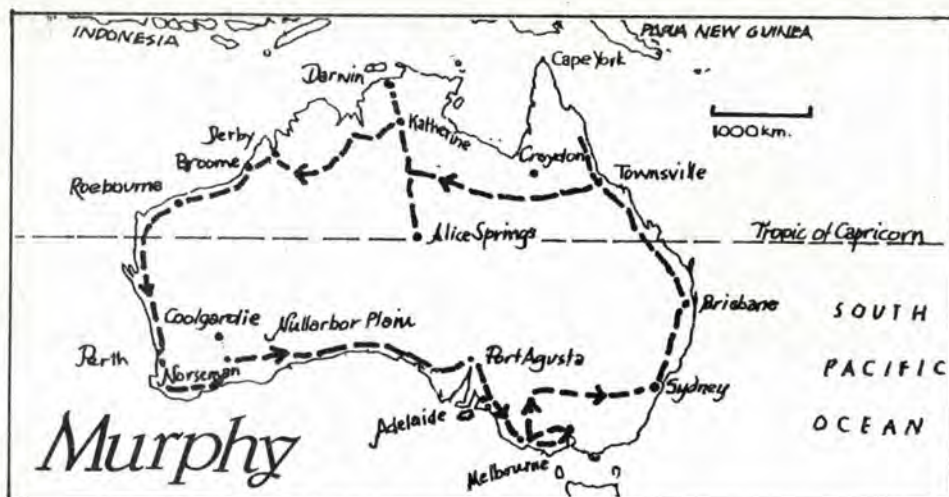
Further along the trail is Western Australia, nearly as vast as the rest put together, but hardly peopled to match. In the North-west everything is tough: the people, the flies, the roads, the weather and, especially, the prices. There is 800km of unmade road; 200km that is really bad. Towns are strictly rationed and the ones you see only just qualify for the title. The "North-west", it seems, extends right down to the west and, as far as prices go, well into the south. At this southerly point travellers realize that they're new Eastern-Staters. This burden is borne with chagrin, because, unfortunately, not all of us can be Sand-groppers.

People are always talking about the coming war between East and West. At times, when I was adjusting to my position as an Eastern immigrant in the land of the Hancocks and the Courts, I thought they might yet be proven right, but not in the context initially intended. But, for all that, on a person to person basis, people in the West are as kind to a pitiable cyclist as any people anywhere.

I stopped in Perth and drew breath. A dash down from Darwin, interrupted by sickness, had left me feeling drained. It was with a dose of reluctance that I stirred into activity to face the Nullarbor. My own confident expectation of tail-winds on that stretch spelt doom itself. The winds were mightily strong and, invariably, from the wrong direction.

Adelaide seemed to be nearly on the doorstep of home until another bout of sickness changed things. Then there was the weather. From Adelaide to Melbourne it rained each and every day I rode. Near Mt Gambier it hailed. At Warnambool the best the mercury could do was quiver below 10°C; the wind blew a gale. Fortunately, it came from the right direction — for once. On the last day I dashed in from Camperdown (completing a "record" 210 km).

With grey clouds and rain foreboding I tackled the familiar Melbourne traffic. In no time home



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was around the corner, and I rolled up, wet from a downpour. I was not particularly tired; I was refreshed by a great sense of victory. I was grimy and dirty and every pack, utensil and article of clothing was much the worse for wear. But that didn't concern me at all. This was the 192nd day and I had completed 19,200 km.

I could talk excitedly about the trip and the experiences. I could talk of the trail of broken and worn equipment: the six rear tyres and three front tyres; three rear wheels and two front wheels; three front gear changers, three sets of chainwheels and two individual pedal arms; three gear clusters, four gear cables, five axles, four thornproof tubes and one ordinary tube; perhaps a dozen cotter pins, four centre-bracket axles, four sets of centre-bracket cups and ball-bearings; and in excess of forty-five individual spokes, put, mostly, into the rear wheel.

I could talk of the towns and creeks: Speed and Wombat, or Bellimbopinni and Yarriambiack; of unlikely names that I encountered more than once, like Campaspe, Cabbage Tree, Native Dog, Wauchope and Wagga Wagga; Mile Creeks numbered from One to a Hundred and Gin Creeks in every colour of the rainbow.

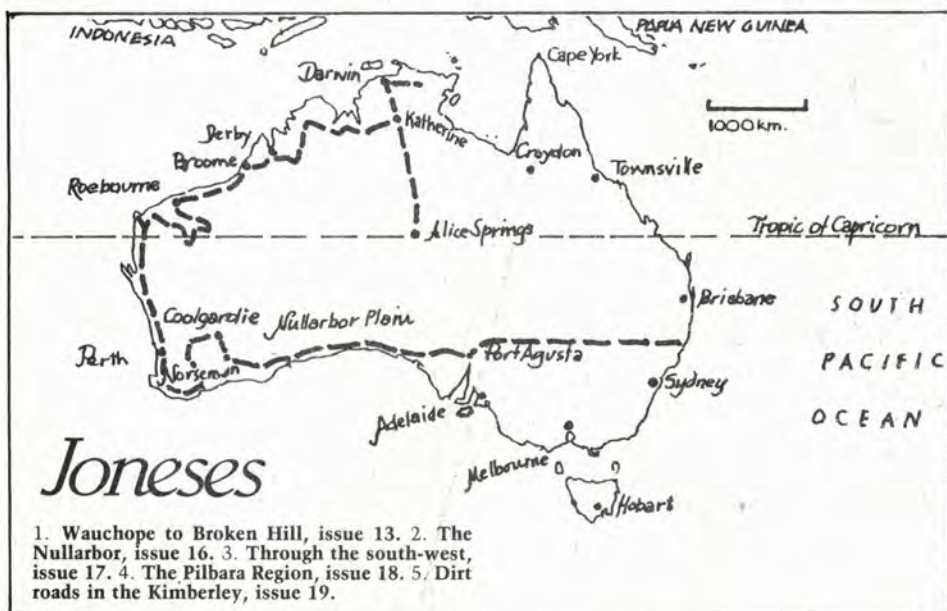
I could talk of the people I had met; unseeing and malevolent truckies; belligerent Sydney drivers; hitchhikers of all sorts; a Queenslander who jinxed me; a Fijian girl who harangued me; noisy kids, cheeky kids and admiring kids; crotchety locals, and marathon yachtsmen; a couple who tried to give me money; ex-cyclists and old-timers; Territorians with skin-grafted hats; an artist on the Nullarbor; a sharp-shooter who shot at my shoe; road workers and railway workers; drivers who stared, swerved, bombarded, shouted, glanced or waved at me; people who put me up and fed me; gracious hosts in Orange, Townsville, Alice Springs and Perth; a crank-repairer in the Never-Never; people on the road who fed me and proffered me with drinks; people who pulled over to talk and to look, others to photograph, others to do all those things without pulling over at all. There were people always and everywhere and I can honestly say that I never met a real bad one amongst them.

Put simply then, the crux of this story is that, a while ago, I was consumed by a desire to cycle around Australia; now I am not. The pilgrimage responsible for that transition is full of incredible detail, much of which I have already forgotten. Yet, it represented the sort of experience I would never expect again on the same terms and in the same way. Certainly, it has affected me, my outlook on the world and my opinion of myself. I value it as a unique thing, a time-capsule in my memory banks and, perhaps most significantly, as a testament to the power of both people and pedalled transport.



Since late 1981 we have followed the journey of Neil and Jannette Jones as they cycled their way from Wauchope on the Pacific coast across Australia to Perth on the Indian Ocean.

This final installment of their story traces their ride south from Darwin to Alice Springs where they caught the train for home. Above: Most of the journey is through semi-desert country. Water is scarce and tanks such as this one were welcomed and used by the Jones and other cyclists. Water is pumped up into the tank from the ground by means of a windmill. Below: The map shows sections of the Joneses travels featured in issues of *Freewheeling*.



The Overlanders



keeping up with the Joneses

Heading home

by Neil Jones

After a year in Western Australia and seeing Katherine Gorge on the way to Darwin there was very little more we had to do before heading home. The last big piece of the country to see was Kakadu National Park and the road south to Alice.

Kakadu National Park on the escarpment of western Arnhem Land was for us a feast of Aboriginal rock art, dramatic birdlife and scenery. There was about 300kms of dirt road involved but the rewards were tremendous. The park itself is legally in traditional Aboriginal title and leased to the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service. Consequently there is a permanent and ongoing involvement of the Aboriginal people. The magnificent paintings stretch for hundreds of feet along rock walls in cool places away from the heart of the black-soil plains and savannah grasslands.

The best description of the park as a whole is: "just go there". You should preferably travel by bike and have a lot of time to spare to investigate all

you can and get to know the people who live and work there. Mining activity is only going to see the area deteriorate if past experience is any judge.

Space, this time doesn't allow a detailed account of the ride to Alice Springs. We hurried ourselves in any case after getting back onto the Stuart Highway at Pine Creek. Homesickness and the heat of the day saw us covering 140kms a day all the way.

South through Katherine, Mataranka, Larrimah and Daly Waters were days spent in over 40 degree heat with the nights in the 30's. Once past these towns the evenings cooled and some relief was gained from the heat. The country began to improve too.

We started to leave behind the burnt out beef country and the dirt turned redder. By Tennant Creek we were back in the red dirt country we had fallen in love with in W.A. It was a good feeling.

The greatest pleasure of all was the last ten kilometres into Alice Springs. It must be one of the best approaches to any town in the whole of the country. The MacDonnell Ranges rise in spectral colours and fall away again in deep chasms left and right of the road.

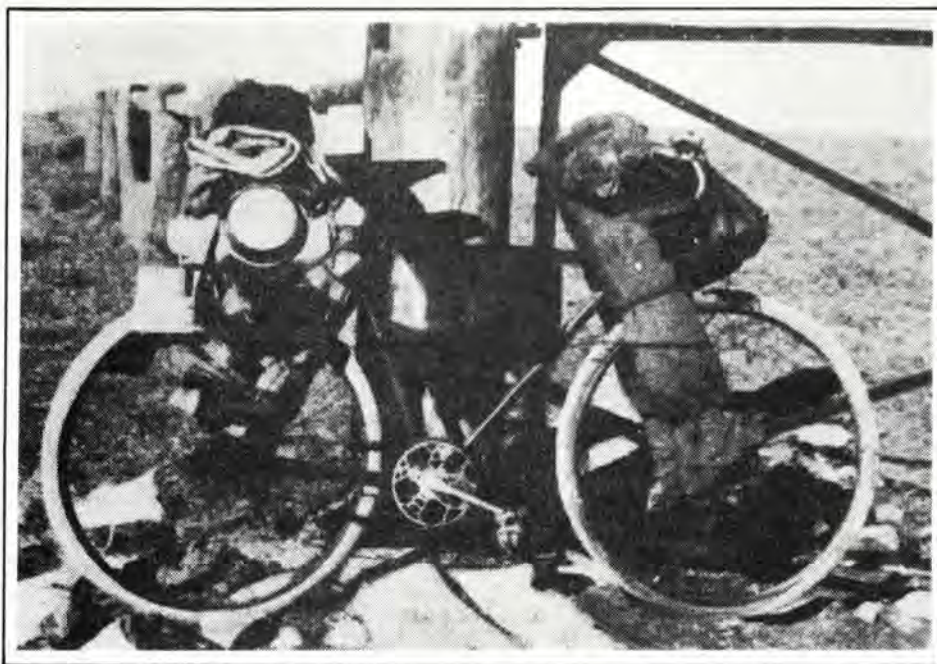
We spent a week in town waiting for the train to leave for home. That week was spent on day rides around Alice Springs discovering what we could and revisiting places we had been to in 1974. The town had grown amazingly but the country around it maintained its ageless grandeur. There's months of cycling in the area. Ayers Rock is just a two week ride away, there and back. That one will be for next time.

66 August 29, 1911*

Crossed the WA border. Met a mob of cattle out 'storm hunting'. They were led by an old bull; behind him they stretched out in single column, head to tail, for a distance of about five miles. The dust which drifted to leeward gave the appearance of a large grass fire approaching.

The beasts seemed to be very thirsty and tired, with nostrils almost touching the ground. They determinedly kept to the track, which would lead them to the high tablelands 50 miles away where rain had most likely fallen. The old bull-leaders instinct would not fail.

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Birtles' bike photographed at the Qld/NT rabbit fence shows his full kit. The machine was a Universal made by Anthony Hordens (a large Sydney retailer) from English BSA parts. Note the letters on the chainwheel sprocket. From the amount of equipment which must be carried and the conditions encountered, sturdiness is not all that is needed in an overland machine.

Not your average ten-speed

The outback of Australia offers one of the most challenging environments to test rider and machine. Not only are the long distances between towns and water a problem but other things like dreaded three cornered jacks or seemingly endless stretches of unsealed roads demand a very special kind of bicycle to reduce wear and tear on the rider.

On returning from journeys through the rugged northwest we asked Neil Jones to describe the kind of bicycle which performs well under severe outback conditions.

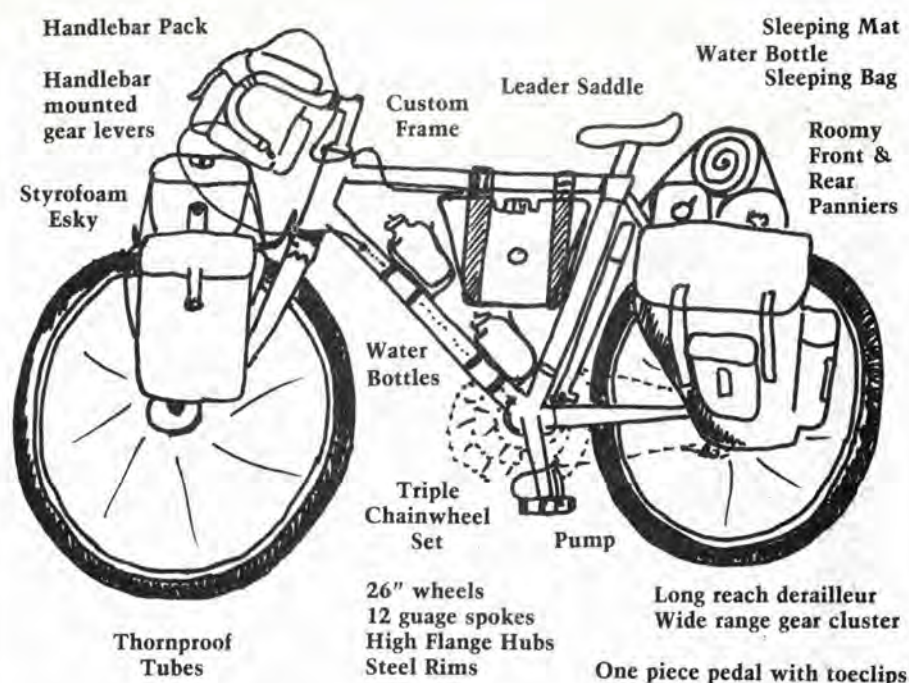
At the time of writing a new type of bicycle — the Mountain Bike — was making its debut on the Australian market. As an appendix Neil adds his comments on the suitability of this machine for overland and outback use.

Wheels, Tyres and Tubes

For any extensive touring west of the Great Divide guarding against three-cornered jacks, double-gees or thorns is imperative. Thorn-proof tubes are available in virtually every town which supplies basic bike parts. Although they slow you down they are a safe way to keep going punctureless for many thousands of kilometres. A further problem with thorn-proof tubes is the low

pressure type valve. This can be overcome by carrying spare valves of the type made of metal and red plastic. These valves will hold as good a pressure over a day or longer as with schrader and high pressure types.

Damaged wheels are the source of many nightmares. Broken spokes and buckles are top of the complaints list. Many European and most Japanese cyclists ride on 26 inch wheels and for good reason. They're stronger. For virtual trouble free wheels with respect to



The seat of the problem

Plastic seats are the proverbial pain in the derriere. For men, the old and tried Brooks Professional leather saddle is your best friend. The leather has a natural spring for comfort on bumpy roads, wears to fit your body and the leather absorbs sweat resulting in extra comfort.

For women, a wider seat is required due to wider spacing of the female pelvic bones. Refer to an article in the tenth issue of *Freewheeling* by Amanda Holt, for expanded explanations. My wife, Janette, has found the Italia *Anatomic* very comfortable. After a 1 000 km ride over dirt roads through Western Australia's Pilbara region, such opinions from Janette bespeak extensive experience.

Transmission

Gearing and pedals provide hours of discussion if you care to talk bikes with other tourers. Up until this point the emphasis has been simplicity, strength and comfort. For gearing purposes I make judgements on less fundamental bases.

Cotterless cranks are mandatory whether you want one gear or twenty-one. My preferences for gears are for front triple chain ring set of 34 to a 46 to a 60 tooth ring. For a practical rear cluster a 14 to 34 speed Shimano or SunTour is reliable. All up it's a 15-speed arrangement.

The benefits in such multiple choice is that unless you can't find traction on a dirt road you need never get off and push. The one to one ratio (26") of bottom gear gets you up any hill with you still in the seat. Over a long day and a long ride it's always quicker and in the long term easier to ride a bike laden with gear up a hill than to walk it.

The high gear allows you to keep pedalling down hill much longer to take advantage of gravity. This is an important factor in doing big daily distances if that's your bent. It also lets you exploit those rare strong tail winds to their fullest extent. It really is magic to fly in top gear all day long before a following breeze. Nullabor Crossings are ideal for such gearing and breezes.

When the going gets rough you'd be surprised how handy it is to have handlebar mounted gear levers. Your hands stay on the handlebars as you shift gear making shifting safer and easier on bumpy surfaces. Gear changing all round becomes faster and easier too, of course.

What you prefer of course is up to you. People still ride around Australia on single speed back-pedal brakes so find your own way.

Front and rear derailleurs are diverse in cost and effectiveness. Most front derailleurs work well enough on ten speed set-ups but front triples are a problem. Only now front derailleurs

spoke breakages I ride on 26" wheels with heavy 12 gauge spokes. These require the drilling out of the holes in the rim and the hub. The result is worth it.

The first time I crossed the Nullarbor I broke over seventy spokes in 27" wheels with 13 gauge spokes. The second time, incidentally, on 26" wheels and twelve gauge spokes that were four years old we reached halfway between Norseman and Coolgardie when we discovered cracks in my rust-weakened rear wheel rim. By Coolgardie there were six cracks with two about to meet in the middle. Because it was a steel rim the cracks were brazed and the wheel saw the rest of the ride into Kellerberrin 200 kms. east of Perth.

At the time three spokes in the back wheel did break and it's worth pointing out the method used to repair them without spare spokes. Fencing wire is almost a cure-all for bikes. Spokes tend to break near the hub, so by threading wire through the hub, fixing it there and twisting the other end with what is left of the spoke a good temporary repair can be made. Before twisting the spoke and the wire loosen the nipple until it is just gripping the spoke. After the join is made tension can then be applied to true the wheel by tightening the nipple. Spokes in a wheel resist stretching to maintain the shape not compression so spokes don't have to be one piece to get by.

Heavy steel wheels are strong wheels. A 26" x 1 3/8" steel rim with tyre is comfortable to ride on and very strong. If it cracks or even breaks it can be welded or brazed to make cycling to the nearest bike parts supplier possible. Every homestead and service station in the country should be able to help you with such a repair. In national parks

the rangers usually also have oxy-acetylene equipment.

If you like to carry large amounts of food and the general run of campers' luxuries like five to ten litres of water on the back rack, rear axles can break or bend. Bent axles if not replaced quickly will soon be broken axles. It's worth carrying a spare.

Regular cleaning, regreasing and bearing replacement is a basic necessity on an overland tour. Riding in rainy conditions, especially on dirt or sandy roads makes cleaning and regreasing necessary at least once a week, probably sooner. So carry grease, for example in a small container you can refill at a service station, and spare bearings if you think it's likely you will be away from parts suppliers for a good while. Carry a spare axle and cones for your brand of hub in case of breakage or wear.

Each hub clean-out should be accompanied by a checking of the hub-cups. The cups are the part of the hub which the bearings roll against. If the track the bearings make is beginning to crack or become rough or pitted, replacement will be necessary soon. Immediate replacement is preferable.

If the frame fits ride it.

If you don't want back-aches, painful palms from holding yourself up and oversore backside, make sure your frame is suited to your body. Custom built frames are preferable but if you can't afford the expense, deal with a reputable bike shop or frame builder.

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The Anatomic

for triples are coming onto the market. The problem with derailleurs for triples is the cage or chain guide. The cage I've used was made by hand by Jim Lemon in Sydney, and brazed to a second hand SunTour movement. Basically a cage for wide space triples should be longer and wider than that for a ten speed arrangement.

Gearing on rear clusters can be played with indefinitely. A 14 to 34, five speed is extremely serviceable in both hilly and flat country. For the flat though, a 13 to 28 or 13 to 24 is more suitable for those subtle changes in wind speed and grades.

I have tried a 13 to 32, six speed, cluster but found gear changing less positive in that the chain often jumped two gears instead of one or refused to get into the appropriate gear. Even so the increased choices of gears was enjoyable.

Chains can give you great chances for experimenting too. We prefer Sedis gold or silver chains on five speed clusters. They give long distances and good changing.

For a wide-range gear cluster such as 14-34 or 13-28 your rear derailleur must be of the long-arm type. Make and model is virtually up to your bank account as to how much you pay. Once away from major centres chances of replacement parts for derailleurs is virtually nil. So buy according to the quality you can afford. What is useful though, is carrying a spare jockey wheel and bearings as it is possible to break them, or lose them if maintenance lags.

Beware if your rear derailleur finds getting into bottom gear difficult. It may be getting old and sloppy, making catching in the spokes possible.

Even the best of equipment breaks down if not maintained. Janette and I carry a spare chain to swap over when we've completed a stretch of dirt road. There's no need to keep grinding away chain and rings after the dirt has ended. If caught in rainy weather it's good to change to a clean chain after the sun has reappeared.

Even in fine weather and on sealed roads though, cleaning of gear should be done regularly, say every 800 to 1 000 kms. or so. Carrying a chain breaker, cluster removing tool and a toothbrush are then necessary. Regular cleaning of moving parts and their regreasing and oiling may sound tedious but it provides a chance for close inspection of parts and hence prevention of breakdown out on the highway or in the scrub. Any farmer or skilled tradesperson could teach how intrinsic regular machinery maintenance is to reliable machinery performance. A stitch in time and all that.

Wracked Brains and Pannier Racks

What a delightful source of fun racks can be. In 1 000 kms. I had three breaks

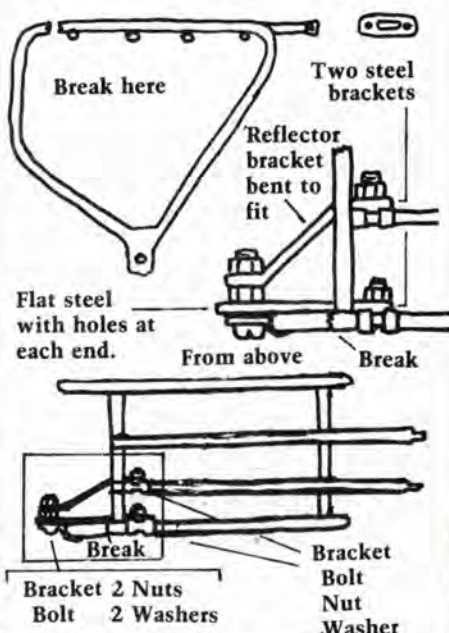
in each of my front and rear racks. So how to overcome breakages then?

Firstly, buy a strong one, i.e. one made of stout steel rod or tube. As far as I've been able to find out even the much revered Blackburn alloy racks will still break under tough conditions or long use. The criteria then, is to find a rack that will resist breaking but once it has, as it is sure to eventually, one that will be repairable on the road, or in a town. Steel racks can be repaired by anyone with a basic knowledge of oxy-welding and the equipment.

But what about when you're ten kilometres out of town and the panniers are falling into the spokes? Well, if you've been clever and willing to carry the weight you've been hanging onto spare nuts and bolts and pieces of steel just for the purpose. Light fitting brackets and tin plate with holes in it are excellent for on the road rack repairs. After one breakage just south of Geraldton, W.A., I bought some nuts and bolts and spring washers and some small brackets just in case it happened again. They've since been re-used half a dozen times.

Breakage usually occurs because of metal fatigue where the rack has to resist swaying the most. You can predict the spots that will break by observing the rack when you put sideways forces onto it. When they're being rewelded don't just settle for that. Find places where reinforcement would be useful and get that done as well. The cost is usually only a few dollars but may save later problems. Keep in mind also that making one weak point stronger may just cause another point to become prone to stress.

In basic structures the triangle is the most easily made shape and possibly the strongest. When making your roadside repair try to make use of a triangular shape to get the rack rigid at the break. For example here's how Janette's last break was fixed at one of the most difficult points to repair.



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At this point the repair only vaguely resembles a triangular structure. But at the break, sideways sway would have made the repair useless on the four wheel drive track we were riding at the time. Using a reflector bracket, this sway was overcome by triangulation.

The first and final essential of such a repair is that all links must be tight. The repair has to be as rigid as the original before the break, otherwise it will rattle apart further down the road.

The fact that the repairs shown have all been on Karrimor style racks is not a criticism of that type. They are excellent for the reason that they are repairable and while made of steel are reasonably light. The types of racks I would most like to see on the Australian touring market are the "low-rider" type common amongst French and Japanese tourers. These still break too but the keeping of the weight low must go a long way to reducing sway that so often does the damage.

Where To Put It All

Finally we look at panniers and storage. Panniers I prefer to be voluminous and each capable of being removed separately from the bike. Robust construction and a number of pockets for different items are necessary for long distance riding. You

don't want screw drivers jabbing into your curry powder and other such disasters.

Janette likes a basket on the handlebars for easy access to drinks and other odds and ends. I enjoy a handlebar pack for the camera, maps and other items you want handy but protected.

The Mountain Bike - its suitability

Since returning home I've had the opportunity to briefly try out the new "mountain bike" that has appeared out of that great hive of industry to our north. They're impressive in their abilities to provide leisure riding on rough terrain but there are a few points I'd look at in relation to long distance touring.

Weight — Not of major importance but there's more to lift or drag or pull if caught in circumstances like unrideable terrain or trying to get to a campsite beyond an unbroken fence.

Speed — On dirt roads they would more than likely speed the riding up if only for the fact that the rider would get bogged less often but on the sealed road there is a great resistance in the tyres. This may be tolerable depending on the rider's state of mind but on a

round Australia ride a lot of time would be lost on sealed road. This may be overcome by using raised centre tread tyres now available.

Handling in sandy and rough conditions — This of course is the strong point of these bikes. Once off sealed road in the Territory and northern W.A. roads are very sandy, corrugated and slow. Mountain bikes do a lot better in these conditions.

Tyre replacement — All tyres wear out so when far up north or out west spares would need to be carried. The only alternative is to have a reliable person or dealer in a city who can send off a spare at short notice. There will always be a lag of a few days in that case. Being thick, tyres may not suffer thorn problems until well worn but a sleeve of rubber, say an old tube, between tube and tyre may be necessary.

Overall — Still a special purpose bike when all said and done. Cost of tyres in wear and slower travel on sealed roads make them unsuitable for long distance tours but as a special treat to do the Gibb River Road or Kakadu National Park they would be excellent. Rides on forestry tracks or national parks in the Great Divide of the east coast would be good areas as well. In fact these types of rides would be the most suitable, i.e. those rides with maximum dirt and minimal distances on sealed roads.

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Left: The all new Apollo Mountain Bike. Excellent value and performance at the right price. **Centre:** The Apollo 18 speed tourer. The machine for casual or long distance trips. **Right:** The Apollo V 14 speed. Aerodynamic styling and lightweight chrome moly frame. An ideal bike for triathlons, club racing or day riding.



Apollo 3.5

A new seasons offering

Freewheeling
ROAD TEST



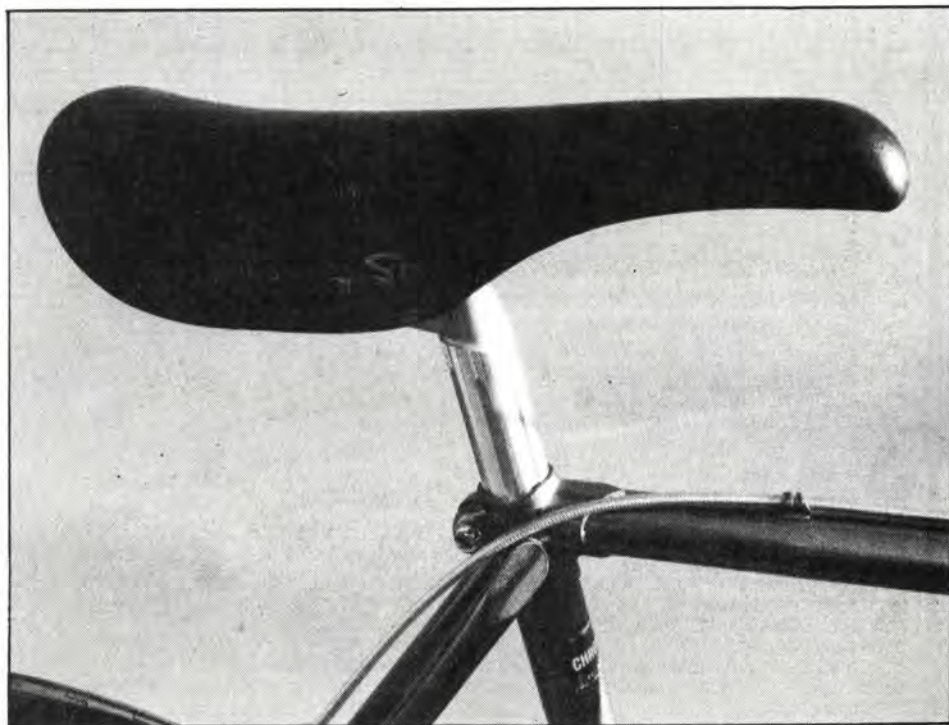
As the number denotes this model has been slipped into the Apollo range between the popular Apollo III and IV models.

It is an all new bike in that it features for the first time in Australia the Shimano 105 series components.

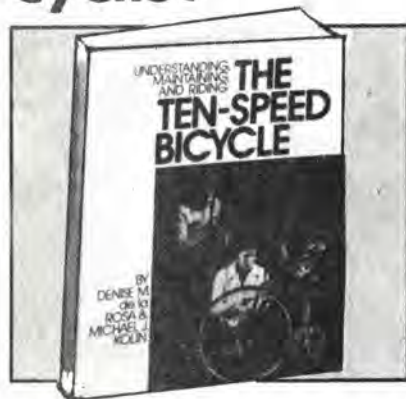
Shimano have apparently learned from the customer and dealer criticism levelled at their gimmicky attitude to new product development over the last few years. The 105 series (only time will tell) thankfully rectifies some of the inadequacies of the lighter 600EX series by putting more metal where it is needed. Thus the rear derailleur tension spring is fully enclosed in metal instead of plastic. Gone too is the superficial ornamentation of the EX series and the result in the 3.5 is a clean stylish look that blends well with the straight forward appearance of the familiar Apollo decals.

With so many good Japanese bikes available in Australia it is often difficult to tell one from another. The Apollo 3.5 is fortunately the first of its kind to use the new Shimano equipment combined with tried and true favourites such as the excellent Araya alloy rims. Added unique styling is provided with the attractive silver lurex handle bar tape. One could almost say that the Apollo has

The sleek lines of the Apollo's saddle give this bike a sporty image. As with most of Apollo's well finished range of bicycles, the 3.5 features brazed-on cable guides and hex key seat pillar bolt. The alloy saddle pillar is SR Laprade which has a micro adjust hex key adjusting bolt.



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Detail of Shimano 105 transmission. Note the cable routing for the rear derailleur. The Apollo 3.5 uses brazed-on cable guides under the bottom bracket shell. This position is becoming popular on all well finished frames. The rear derailleur cable stop is also brazed to the under-side of the chain stay. Other frame features shown include one set of bidon mounts and eyelets for rear rack mounting.

an Italian look but with the clever Japanese that just the effect they are striving for.

This bike is fitted with 1 1/4" tyres and rims which makes it instantly usable as a light-weight touring bike. The gearing is a little high for heavier, longer tours but very suitable for weekend journeys. The addition of an alloy rear rack would make this bike an ideal round town bike for the sport or fitness minded cyclist.

The frame angles and choice of components combined to give this bike a very comfortable 'feel' on the road. The frame is well built and finished to a high standard.

With a low gear of 47 this bike comes set up for quick riding. Its simple to operate cross over gearing arrangement sacrifices a couple of gears in the cause of straight forward shifting.

Apollo 3.5

Suggested Retail Price \$399

Sizes (cm) 49, 53, 56, 58, 64cm.

Size Tested 58cm.

Frame: Tubing Kuwahara 4130 chrome moly tubing. Fully lugged brazed brake and gear cable guides. Brazed on bidon mounts. Cast fork crown. Kuwahara (MA60) type head set. Allen key seat bolt.

Head tube angle 73°

Seat tube angle 73.5°

Bottom bracket height 278mm

Fork rake 52mm

Wheel base 1040mm

Chain stay 435mm

Transmission:

Chainwheel set Shimano 105 Alloy 170mm crank.

Chain: Shimano UG Silver/Black

Derailluers: Front — Shimano 105

Rear: Shimano 105

Freewheel: Shimano UG

Gear levers: Shimano 105

Wheels

Rims: Araya 27x1 1/4 alloy HP narrow

Hubs: Shimano 105 small flange QR

Spokes: 14 gauge rustless

4 cross spoking pattern

Tyres & Tubes: IRC HP90

Gum wall Schrader valve

Equipment

Pedals: SR364 alloy with clips straps and reflectors.

Brakes: Shimano 105 levers with gum hoods.

Handlebars: Nitto Olympad 115

Handlebar stem: Alloy

Hex key type 100mm

HB Tape: Silver Lurex

Saddle: Apollo

Leather covered sports type

Saddle pillar: SR laprade alloy micro adjust.

Racks: Not supplied.

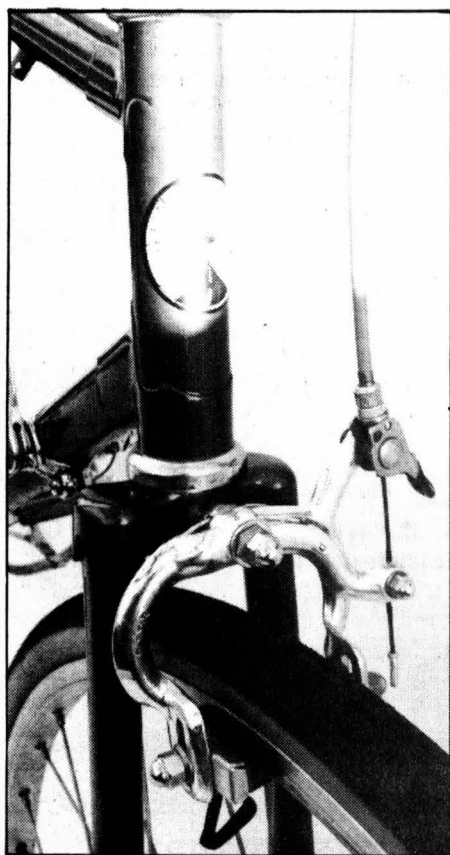
Eyelets fitted.

Gearing

	52	42
14	100.3	X
15	93.6	75.6
17	82.6	66.7
18	73.9	59.7
21	66.9	54.0
24	X	47.3

Basic touring ten Cycle Tour Option 2

Freewheeling
ROAD TEST



This bicycle comes from a Sydney shop which has had a solid involvement in the touring scene. The Option two as the name suggests is one of three possible standard options built by Inner City Cycles from selected touring components.

The Option two is their most popular model and a closer look at the bike reveals why this may be so. The Cycle Tour 2 is a good basic ten speed ready to go as a touring bike. Its equipment is recognizable touring equipment and it is priced at the lower end of the touring market, making it an ideal first bike.

It is designed around an Australian made high tensile steel frame. With Japanese chrome moly frames coming into the country fitted with complete brazed on cable guides this frame looks plain to say the least. Wisely the builders have ignored the crude brake cable stops which are definitely on the way out. This is because the splitting of the brake cable outer allows the inner cable to rust and adds friction to brake operation.

The Option 2 features the well finished Dia Compe 500G brakes. There is ample clearance for the fitting of mudguards.

The frame angles are a little unusual. It is a very 'laid-back' bike with distinctive touring bike handling.

The transmission is of good quality. The SR cranks used will permit a low 28 tooth chain wheel to be fitted though the standard sizes are usually 52/56. Shimano Deore gear changers and down tube levers are used. These employ the Centron self adjusting mechanism which allows for smoother quieter gear shifts.

The Option two comes fitted with excellent Super Champion alloy rims fitted with a good touring tread tyre. Hubs have quick release axles.

The brakes are Dia Compe 500G side pulls and are a little soft in their action. The brake levers however are one of the best in their class.

As with any true-blue touring machine the Cycle Tour comes fitted with a steel chrome Karrimor pattern pannier rack and comfy anatomic saddle. Even though the vinyl covered Selle Italia anatomic saddle is at the cheaper end of the range it is to my bottom one of the most comfortable saddles sold. A wider womens version is also available.

In short a good basic touring ten from a specialist touring shop.

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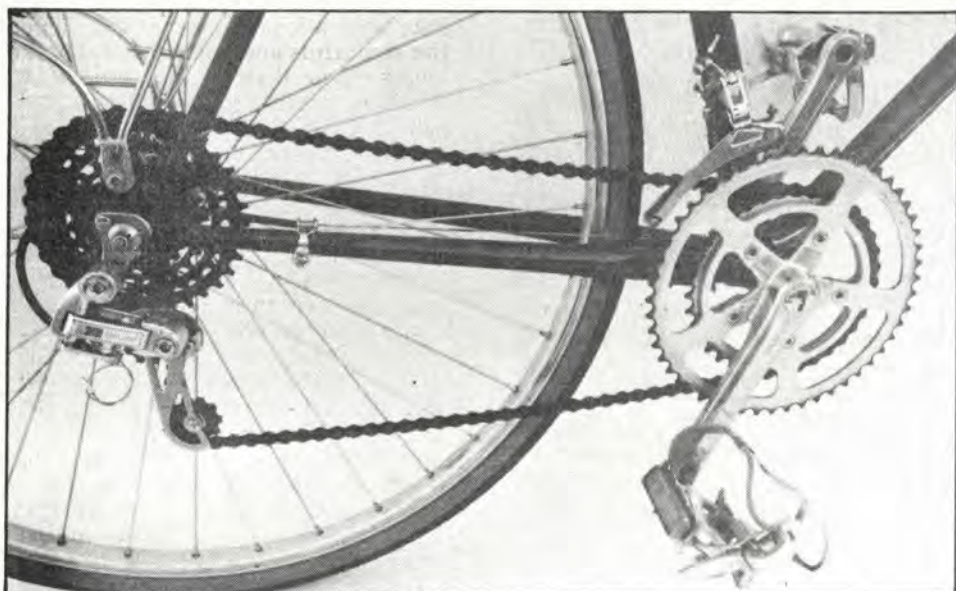
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J/J F/W



Cycle Tour Option 2

Suggested Retail Price \$380

Sizes (cm) 49, 53, 56, 58, 61, 64, 69*cm

Size Tested 58cm

Frame: Tubing — Plain gauge high tensile steel. Fully lugged. Welded box fork crown. Pressed fork ends and drop outs. Brazed on pump pegs. WHW steel head set. Standard seat bolt.

Head tube angle 71°

Seat tube angle 73°

Detail of the wide range gearing transmission on the Option Two. Shimano Deore gear changers offer large gear range capacity.

Bottom bracket height 275mm

Fork rake 55mm

Wheel base 1070mm

Chain stay 455mm

*69cm model extra \$20.

Transmission:

Chainwheel set SR Custom

5TG Double Alloy 170mm crank.

Chain: D.I.D. Standard
Derailleurs: Front — Shimano Deore
Rear: Shimano Deore
Freewheel: Shimano STD
Gear levers: Shimano Deore

Wheels

Rims: Super Champion 25mm Alloy
Hubs: Miche Alloy QR. Small flange.

Spokes: 14 gauge rustless 4 cross spoke pattern.

Tyres & Tubes: Cheng Shin Gum Wall Block tread. Schrader valve.

Equipment

Pedals: SR SP150

Alloy with clips straps and reflectors
Brakes: Diaconpe 500G with drilled levers and gum hoods.

Handlebars: Alps alloy randonneur.

Handlebar stem: Alps Alloy Hex key type 80mm reach.

Saddle: Selle Italia Anatomic Vinyl

Saddle pillar: Steel standard

Racks: Steel Karrimor pattern.

Mudguards: Not fitted.

Pump: Plastic Std.

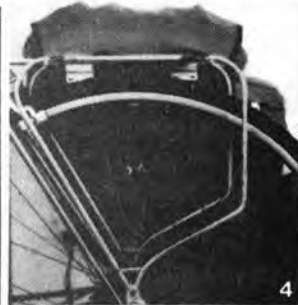
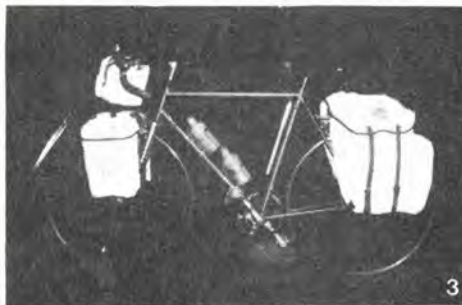
Gearing

	52	36
14	100.3	X
17	82.6	57.2
22	63.8	44.2
28	50.1	34.7
34	X	28.6

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THE FAT TYRE FANATIC

Mountaineer *Apollo's low priced entry* *into the mountain bike field*

It is obvious from the interest generated in the small shipment of Araya Mountain Bike (*Freewheeling JAN/MAR*) that there is definitely a place for this kind of bicycle on the Australian scene.

The Apollo Bicycle Company has entered the field with a lower priced

model which will probably become a best seller for them until the new breed of Taiwanese framed bike arrive later on in the year.

The Apollo Mountaineer is an all Japanese bike made by Kuwahara from good quality components. Apollo have obviously designed their

bike with a low price in mind, hence the steel rims and conventional brake levers. Nevertheless, it is still up to the quality standards set by this company.

Conventional length Dia Compe cantilever brakes are controlled by straight bar levers mounted on the wide alloy handle bars. These levers are identical to the usual drop bar type levers only they have straight lever arms. As with proven Mountain Bike designs thumb shifter gear levers are also mounted close to the brake controls. These are the new suntour microlite thumb shifter — smooth acting and easy to operate. They make the simple Apollo 12 speed gears quick and simple to shift.

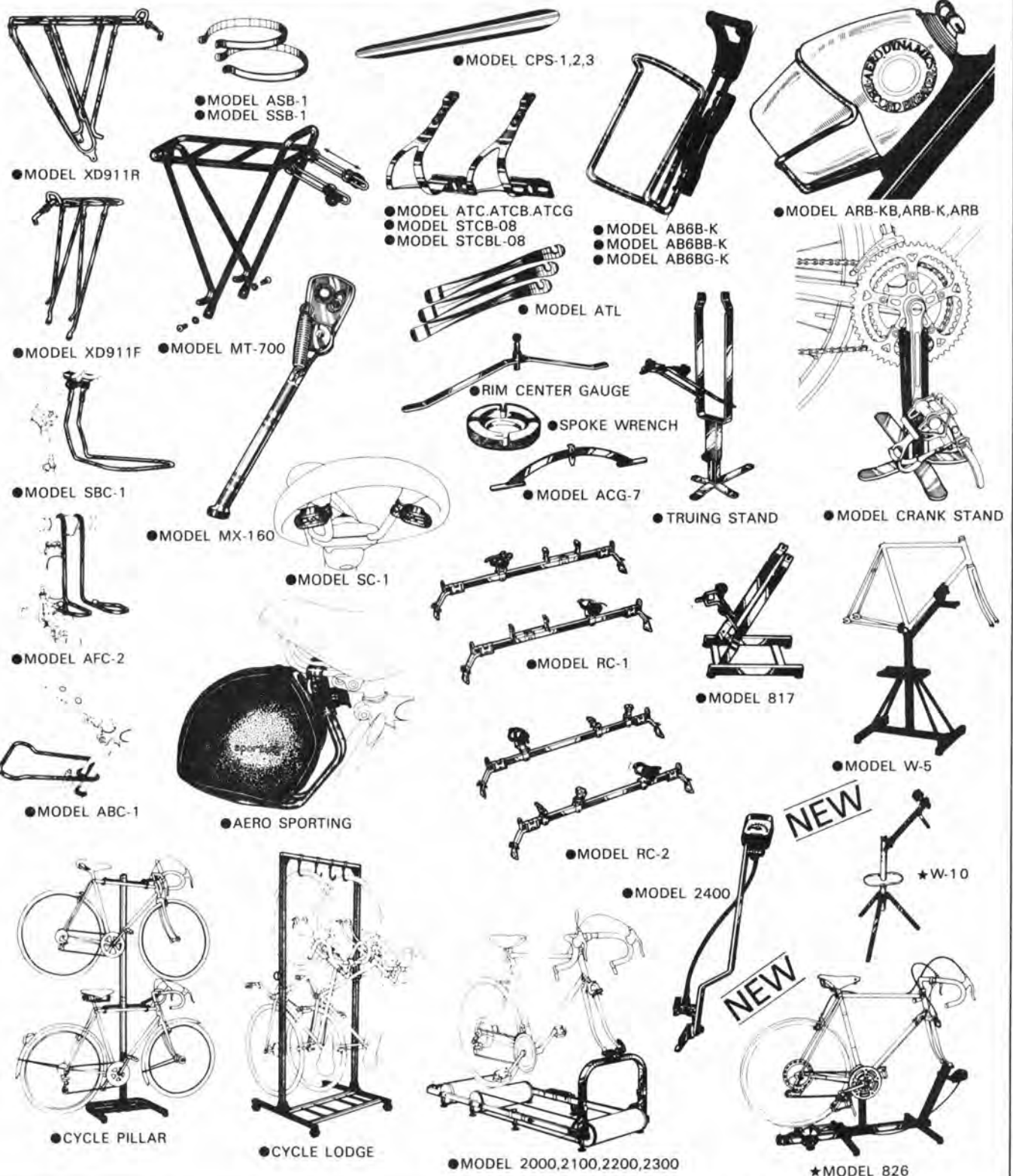
The gearing itself is acceptable. There is one duplication around the crossover point. Good, reliable equipment like SunTour AG (Alpine Gearing) shifters are fitted. These derailleurs could easily accommodate a triple chain wheel set if ever one was retro-fitted.

The Japanese anatomic saddle is hard and is evidence that the design of anatomic saddles is not fully understood in that country.

Finally a word of advice if you want improved wet weather braking on the steel rims: ask your dealers to fit the new leather brake blocks and then you're set to head for those hair raising (down) hills.

Frame sizes on mountain bikes are usually 25—50mm smaller than conventional bikes due to rough riding position and higher bottom bracket. The QR seat pillar clamp allows quick adjustment to suit riding conditions.

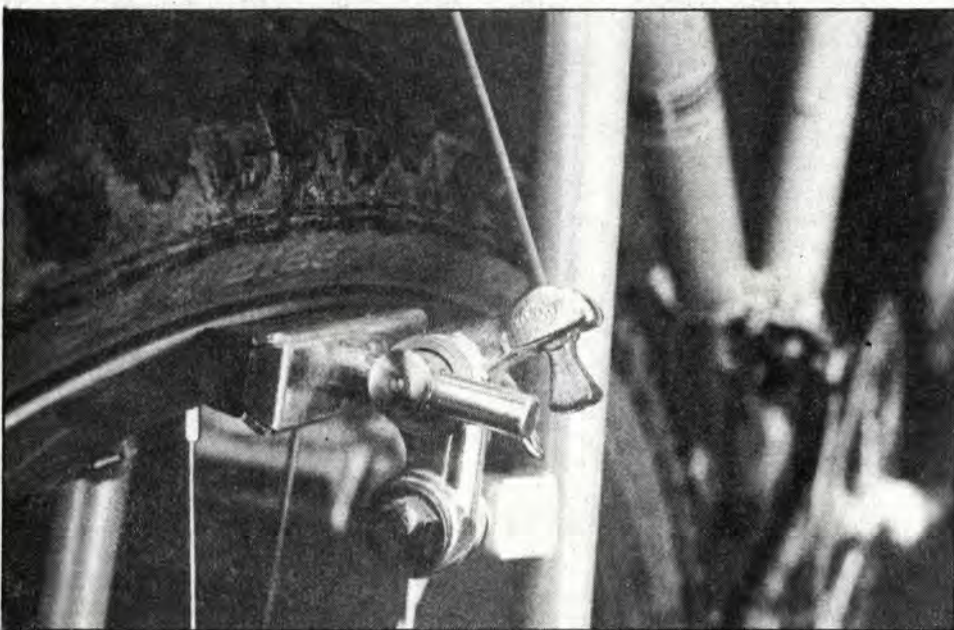
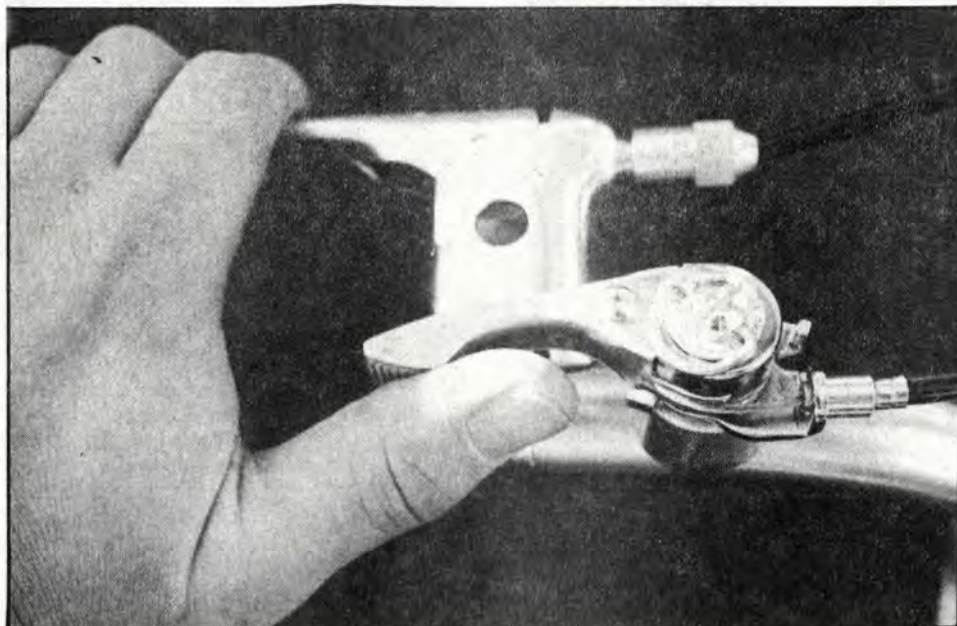




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Above: The convenience of Mountaineer control positions is shown here. The Dia Compe gear levers are of a similar type to drop bar levers. The gear control lever is the new SunTour microlite thumb shifter. Below: The bike comes fitted with standard Dia Compe cantilever brakes and knobbly 26 x 2.125 tyres.

Apollo Mountaineer

Suggested Retail Price \$399

Sizes (cm) 54 cm

Size Tested 54 cm

Frame: Tubing — P.G. Chrome moly. Fully lugged. Brazed on gear cable guides. Brazed on brake cable guides. Welded box fork crown. Cast fork tips and vertical drop outs. Kuwaraha (MAGO) type head set. SunTour QR seat bolt.

Head tube angle 69°

Seat tube angle 70°

Bottom bracket height 290 mm

Fork rake 60 mm

Wheel base 1050 mm

Chain stay 460 mm

Transmission:

Chainwheel set Sugino GT Double Alloy 170 mm crank

Chain: KEC Black

Derailleurs: Front — SunTour AG Tech

Rear: SunTour AG

Freewheel: SunTour ProCompe 6 sp.

Gear levers: SunTour Power Thumb Shifter.

Wheels

Rims: Araya Steel 26 x 1.75

Hubs: Suzue Large Flange Alloy

Spokes: 14 gauge rustless 3 cross pattern

Tyres & Tubes: IRC Racer X-1 Knobbly tread. Skin wall. Schrader valve.

Equipment

Pedals: Shimano PDMX15 Alloy D/S with reflectors.

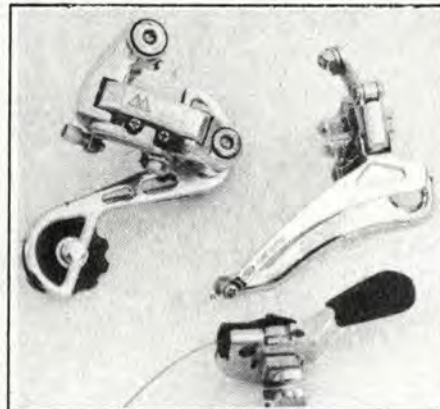
Brakes: DiaCompe Cantilever Std. type with flat bar type brake levers.

Handlebars: Nitto Alloy flat bar type.
Sponge grips.
Handlebar stem: Grim Compe Alloy 100 mm reach
Saddle: Ariake Jaguar II Anatomic
Saddle pillar: Sugino Alloy Std. type.
Racks: Not supplied Eyelets on drop outs F & R.
Mudguards: Not supplied. Clearance adequate.
Pump: Not supplied.

Gearing

	48	34
14	92.6	X
17	76.2	54.0
20	64.8	45.9
24	54.0	38.3
28	46.3	32.8
32	X	28.7

NEXT ISSUE



The Shimano MTB (AL-11) equipment is featured on the new Malvern Star Bushranger reviewed by the Fat Tyre Fanatic next issue

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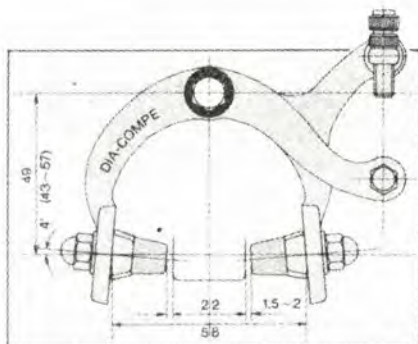
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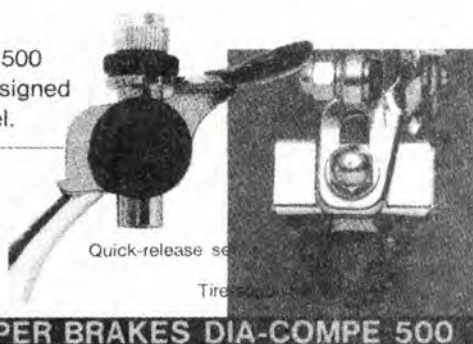


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REPCO



Victoria's pedal clubs

Fun and safety for young cyclists

by Peter Harris

Likemost aspects of Road Safety, "SAFETY for Cyclists", involves a variety of people. Legislators; Engineers; Educators; Law Enforcers; Motorists; Parents AND cyclists.

Most people concerned with the Road Toll as it affects young cyclists particularly, may already be familiar with the quite alarming figures released last year, by the Victorian State Bicycle Committee, that 4719 cyclists — 500 adults, the rest children — committed 5433 offences from the beginning of December 1980 to the end of March 1981.

Riding on footpaths, riding without lights, and carrying passengers on cycles, top the list of offences committed. But there was also a high incidence of unroadworthy bicycles, cyclists endangering pedestrians, riding on the wrong side of the road, and careless riding reported.

Inspector Bob Stephens, police representative on the VSBC said a special police campaign was aimed to reinforce the bicycle education some children were now receiving as part of

their school curriculum. Under the campaign, which follows a trail survey by the Geelong Bike Plan, police officers now carry Bicycle Offence Reports for issue to cyclists who break the law. Inspector Stephens said, "If we can encourage young cyclists to act responsibly now, then eventually they will become better motorists, safer and more considerate to other road users.

These statistics really do illustrate that Bicycle Safety is a subject that deserves an amount of our attention.

Quite a number of important initiatives are being developed and will be introduced as part of the Melbourne Bike Strategy. Formal education courses for school age children are now available with Victorian Safety and Traffic Authority's *Bike-Ed Kit* and the Victoria Police has a Hazard Recognition Course for cyclists, entitled *Two Wheels, One Life* which is available for presentation by members of the Victoria Police to schools and community groups.

It is widely accepted today that some form of organised recreational

and instructional activity is beneficial to compliment any formal cycling EDUCATION, that may be available to young riders. The Victorian Pedal Clubs are quite convinced that cycling clubs *can* contribute a great deal towards encouraging children in safe riding habits and believe that every organisation that associates itself with young riders, has a great responsibility, in this regard.

Bike Safety Starts with Pedal Clubs

As a worthwhile supplement to the courses now available to young riders, the Victorian Pedal Clubs organise an interesting program of competitive, recreational and educational cycling activities, which involves young riders and their families. The organisation has been operative since the early 1950's and is quite unique within Australia, providing activities which are styled to suit *both* girls and boys, riding any style of bicycle.

The competitive riding events, skill tests, which have been developed by the Pedal Clubs in Victoria, are similar to those adopted in the more formal courses which are coming into wide

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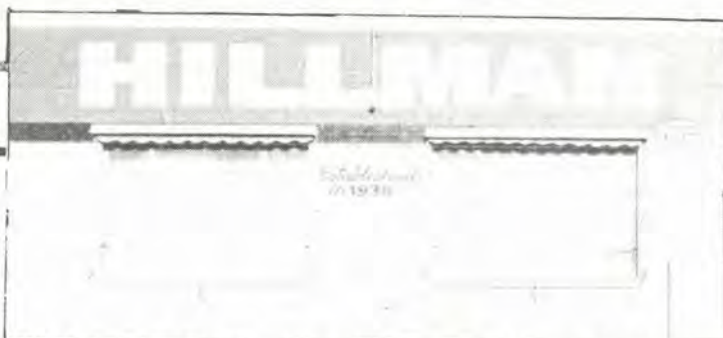


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use. Family Fun Ride activities are planned to involve the riders and their families in safe and enjoyable riding in National Parks and Reserves.

Almost all of the published bike-plans advocate the practice of basic exercises, to develop cycling skills and of course the necessary road safety instruction. Pedal Clubs combine the riding exercises into a competition which is enjoyed by both girls and boys in separate age groups, which cater for beginners and experienced riders alike. Generally all styles of bicycles are suitable for Pedal Club activities; dragsters, roadsters and B.M.X. style bikes, are particularly well geared for the competition events.

The Individual racing events are : *Slow Bike*, the slowest rider to finish, a great event which develops co-ordination and balance; *Ride and Clutch*, a sprint with a difference; *Sprint*, over 60 to 80 metres; *Slalom*, which develops fast reflexes and control; and *Ride and Run*, a combination of riding and running.

Trophies are awarded for first place, and certificates for second and third placegetters. The team competition between clubs involves; Sprint, Ride and Run, Slalom, Ring Race and an Open Age *Special* race, which usually provides plenty of thrills and some surprising results.

Road Safety Instruction takes the form of practical tests for experienced riders and road safety questions are given to *all* riders. Mechanical checks are carried out on each riders bicycle and some clubs extend this to practical bike maintenance sessions, for inclusion in their local club programs.

Pedal Clubs into the '80s

In this day of increased emphasis on the practical programs for young cyclists, Victorian Pedal Clubs can stand on its record of almost 30 years of involvement with junior cyclists. Whilst the record is something as yet unequalled in the field of junior cycling, the movement has quite a way to go if the numbers involved with the organisation are to return to the hundreds, that used to compete at the monthly competition events. A recently reprinted list of Affiliated Pedal Clubs of 1961, shows a total of no less than 42 Metropolitan and Country clubs.

The current number of affiliated clubs have been formed and continue to operate, in most cases, by the joint efforts of a number of interested families who co-ordinate the individual activities of their local clubs.

Some fine organisations have been involved with Pedal Clubs over the years, the R.A.C.V., the Victoria Police and the Retail Cycle Traders



have all, at one time or another, lent their assistance or expertise to the success of Pedal Clubs.

It was most gratifying and extremely pertinent to Pedal Club ideals, to note the comments of a most respected gentleman experienced in cycling, Sir Hubert Opperman, who in his opening address to delegates at the Bike Plan Australia '81 Conference in Geelong, commented, 'The Pedal Clubs have a fine record in their activities for young cyclists and they deserve every support we can offer'.

Currently the Victorian Pedal Clubs are taking an active interest in the development of the Melbourne Bike Strategy and have been involved with ROSTA in an in-service course for delegates of Affiliated Pedal Clubs. This enabled the V.P.C. to take

delivery of a Bike-Ed Kit, kindly donated by the Geelong Bike-Plan to Victorian Pedal Clubs, for their use in their education program for young cyclists.

The Victorian Pedal Clubs have a Liaison Group which has at its disposal printed publicity material, display boards and a film, which is available for presentation to club meetings, school parent groups and meetings of interested members of the public.

If you would like any further information concerning Pedal Club activities, or would like advice or assistance in the formation of a Pedal Club, you are invited to contact the V.P.C. Liaison Group:- J. McDonough 49 2743, P. Palermo 336 2239 or P. Harris (03) 337 6399, 38 Heather Ave, East Kew Vic 3033.



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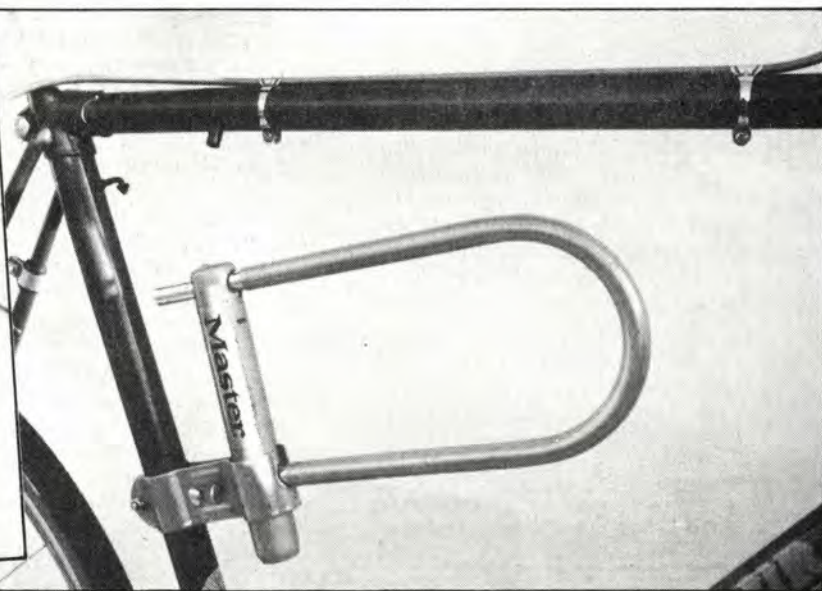
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Freewheeling PRODUCT REVIEW



Above: The four 'U' locks tested. The top two look a lot longer in the photo as they are standing up. Below: The most successful way of locking a bike with a U lock is to take off the front wheel and pass the lock through both wheels and frame. Top Right: The best tool of the bike thief: bolt cutters. Bottom right: Carrying brackets utilize the space within the frame triangle and give quick and easy access to the lock. Opposite page: The 'folkaway' hinge design of the Kryptonite 4.



Beat the thief



A typical scenario

The scene is a busy crowded city street. In amongst the clutter of urban furniture — rubbish bins, parking meters, street signs — a lone bicycle stands secured to a steel pole with coiled cable and padlock.

From out of the crowd of people who pass by a person approaches, hesitates and then walks straight up to the machine. From his jacket he produces a largish pair of electrical pliers and, as quick as a flash, the lock is cut and the bicycle is freed. Casually he departs, the entire incident occupying barely thirty seconds of an observers time, that is if anyone was watching.

The bike 'theft' described above was part of a 'set up job' undertaken by *Freewheeling* in a busy uptown section of Sydney. The object was to show readers how easy it is for a thief to operate in urban conditions. We realize that by revealing this incident we could be showing dishonest people how to rip off others. However, we

believe that until bike riders themselves realize how simple the theft operation is and begin to take the necessary precautions, only then will the alarming rate of bicycle theft be reduced.

A growth industry

With the increasing usage of bicycles in Australia bicycle theft like car theft has become a growth industry. In the state of Victoria alone last year over 13,000 bicycles were stolen many are never recovered.

Most theft is the result of opportunistic stealing where a person will take a bike which is usually not locked and is left outside a house or shop while its owner is inside. In these cases the person who steals the bike is usually not a professional bike thief and often the stolen machine is located elsewhere in the area discarded by the joy riding thief.

At the other end of the scale is the professional thief who operates in high usage areas such as university campuses and railway stations. This thief is usually better equipped with bolt cutters or hacksaw and waiting van. There is little evidence of a large scale professional operation in Australia but in the large US cities such gang type thefts are becoming increasingly common.

The biggest assistance to a potential thief a bike owner can offer is to use a cheap locking device. Cost is not a guide either. Some locks sold for as much as \$20 will not stand up to bolt cutter attack. The usual rationale behind the purchase of a thin chain or cable lock is 'there is no cable or chain sold which will resist the bite of a three foot bolt cutter so why spend a lot of money on the problem'.

The big deficiency in this line of thought is that prevention is impossible. A similar line of thought retarded the availability of the new high security 'U' type locks in this country. Many in the bicycle industry thought that bike riders would refuse to buy an expensive locking device to secure their bicycle because theft is unpreventable and 'why spend all that money anyway'.

A person who pays \$40 to lock up their \$40 bicycle is not valuing simply the replacement cost of their machine but the loss of usage and long term benefits of ownership. If a useful mode of transport is suddenly removed the resultant inconvenience can often have disastrous effects on the users mobility and lifestyle.

The phoney economic argument against the use of U type lock further breaks down when the cost of the lock purchase is compared to that other form of bicycle security — theft insurance.

Bicycle insurance premiums are currently quoted at 10% of the value of the bicycle. This means that for a bicycle worth more than \$400 insurance is a poor proposition compared to the full time use of a high security lock.

	Carrying Bracket	Weight	Inside Width	Inside Length	Approx RRP
Kryptonite	Yes	945g	100mm	230mm	\$56.30
Master 50	Yes	1250g	108mm	218mm	\$55.00
Citadel	No	835g	108mm	198mm	\$65.00
Tech Lock	No	975	108mm	195mm	\$39.00



Of all the locks currently available the only ones which adequately prevent theft are the high security 'U' type locks. These are usually constructed of special hardened steels and employ a good quality locking device. There are four types on the market at present. Two of these use the tubular type keys which resist lock picking methods.

One brand has reported successful attacks on only two of the many thousands of its locks which have been sold in the USA.

To see how the locks functioned from a users point of view *Freewheeling* tested each of them over a period of one month.

Kryptonite 4T

This lock uses a tubular type 7 pin high-security locking device and has the longest dimension 'U' of all the locks tested. The lock is coated with black plastic to prevent damage to bike paintwork and was the easiest to operate due to the clever angled insertion design (see picture). The big feature of the Kryptonite is the optional bike housing bracket. This allows the lock to be carried inside the frame triangle and be quickly accessible for constant use.

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Master 50

This lock like the remaining two uses a straight through fitting of the 'U' piece to the straight locking piece. The Master also has an optional mounting bracket which is plasticized to prevent frame damage. This lock uses a flat type locking key and tumbler lock.

Citadel & Tech Lock

The Citadel and Tech Lock are the shortest of all the 'U' locks and are physically identical with the exception that the Citadel uses a tubular type key in its locking device. The Tech Lock is obviously a down market version of the Citadel from the same manufacturer.

The Tech Lock had the roughest action of all locks tested and required at least two complete rotations of the key to unlock it. It was sometimes difficult to work out which direction the key had to be turned to lock or unlock the device.

All locks performed faultlessly against hack saw and bolt cutter attack. Perhaps the only way into them for a thief is by attacking the locking device itself.

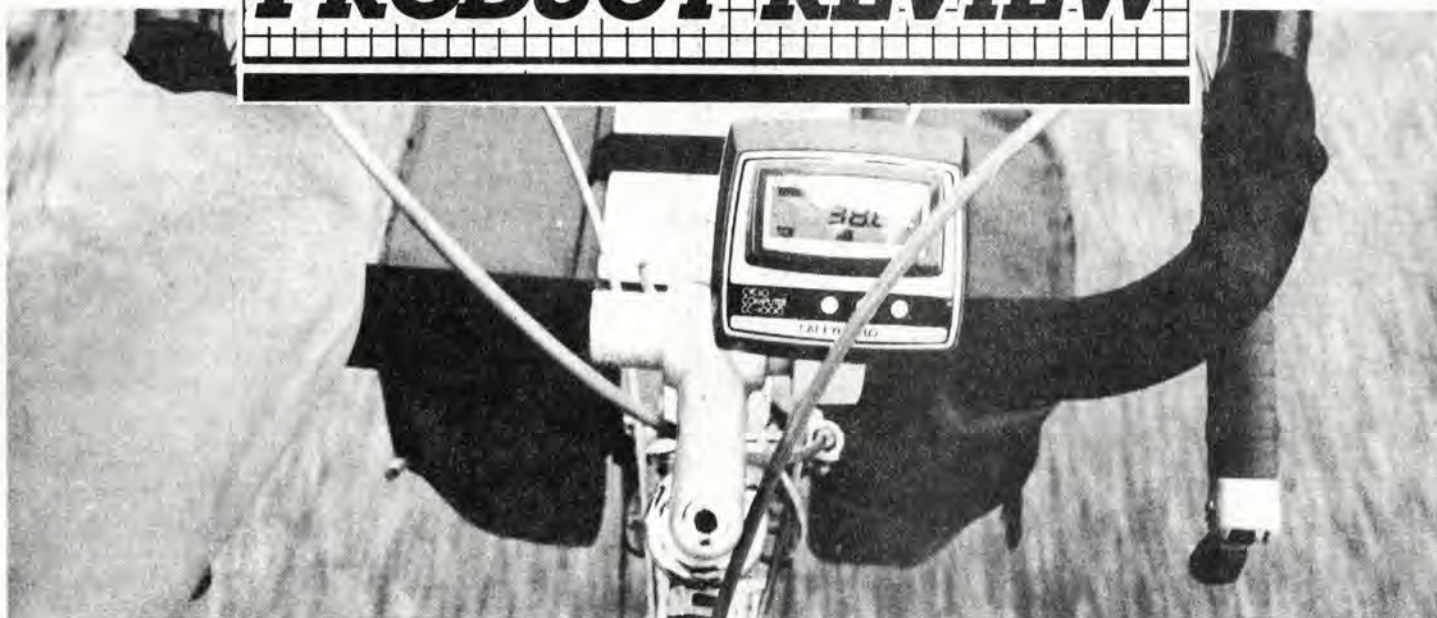
With the advent of quick release wheels it is necessary to remove the front wheel and pass the 'U' through both wheels side by side with the frame to secure all major parts of the bike. This becomes a simple operation once practiced and adds to the incredible peace of mind experienced when using one of these locks.

Oh yes we also tested a few other kinds of locks and report the following. All types of chains were cut using bolt cutters. Even alloy chains were broken using 3 foot bolt cutters cutting on the link weld. Most coiled cables were easily cut using large pliers and all were cut using one foot bolt cutters. Larger cables require larger bolt cutters simply because the jaws on shorter cutters will not open wide enough. The 3 foot bolt cutter cuts through all but the U locks mentioned above.

Warren Salomon

Freewheeling 45

Freewheeling PRODUCT REVIEW



CYCLOCOMPUTER

Cat Eye Cyclocomputer Model CC — 1000

With all the talk about a micro-chip revolution and digital technology replacing analogue, I have always felt remote out there pedalling my bicycle. Not so anymore, for it seems that the 'chips' are about to fall and catch bicycle riders with a vengeance.

Readers of this magazine will by now be familiar with the number of electronic type odometers which have been making regular appearance in the *Freewheeling* new products column. It's time now to look deeper and see if the new wave of electronic bicycle meters are mere gadgetry or useful equipment.

I must confess I was eager to fit a Cat Eye Cyclocomputer when they first went on sale early last year and since then I have been using the meter at every opportunity — mostly for touring but sometimes around town.

The idea of a frictionless, noiseless, accurate odometer instantly appealed to me as I had tried just about every brand of mechanical device over the previous years. For me an odometer is a necessary piece of bicycle equipment. In the past six or seven years I have researched thousands of kilometers of back roads for potential cycle trails and have found that by writing down distance readings into a note book, and relating these findings to physical details such as locations points of interest and signposts, an accurate and lasting understanding can be obtained.

I found that often signposts were wrong and maps were inaccurate.

Often I found by assessing all of my data that the meter itself was also wrong. On one occasion my meter started internally haemorrhaging by adding a few thousand kilometers every ten or so travelled.

Needless to say I approached the electronic era with the same cynicism developed during the mechanical age.

With perfect hindsight I can say that I found the Cyclocomputer a vast

The meter shows a digital read out on a liquid crystal display for the following functions: odometer (which reads distance from when the batteries are installed), Elapsed distance, current speed, elapsed time, average speed and maximum speed. The last two functions require the calculator/computer function built into the meter. There is also a bar type read out for current speed.

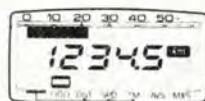
The meter itself is small and when unclipped from its handlebar mounting bracket fits easily into a shirt or coat pocket. This feature is an absolute necessity in thief prone urban areas. The bracket is connected electrically to a stationary sensor unit by means of a cable. The circular moving sensor unit is easily fitted to the spokes of conventional 36 spoke wheels though there may be some difficulty in fitting to 40 spoke wheels or small size 28 spoke types.

Nylon cord locks and rubber pads for cable and bracket mounting are all supplied. Contained within the 24 page instruction booklet are complete operating and mounting instructions. Lighting systems manufacturers take note.

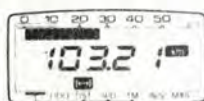
The unit is powered by two penlite type AA batteries. (Alkaline type should be used). The manufacturer quotes battery life at approximately 1 year. This was found to be correct on the meter tested.

On the road

At the time I first fitted the unit to my touring bike I felt that at last my trail research work was to be made easier. However I first had to learn to press



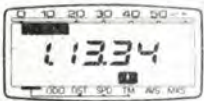
ODO (Odometer)
Counts up to
10,000 km.



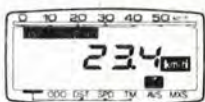
DST (Distance)
Displays distance traveled since last reset.



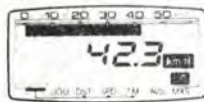
SPD (Current Speed)
Displays current speed.



TM (Time Elapsed Since Reset)



AVS (Average Speed)
Calculates and displays average speed.



MXS (Maximum Speed)
Stores and displays maximum speed.

improvement on previous mechanical devices. The dial is easy to read and once the sequencing switch is understood the meter is simple to operate. It has a few disadvantages but as the first of its type it is a remarkable new product entry into the bicycle field.

the right buttons at the right time.

The second problem I encountered was how to record the increased amount of data the unit made available to me. Certainly the noting of average speeds is useful in checking back over route notes at a future date when the memories of a particular journey had left my mind.

The unit's biggest drawback is its attempt at physical simplicity by combining the control of six separate functions into one sequencing switch. The problem is that if a function which appears in the sequence before the one displayed is required, you have to work through the complete sequence to read the required function. This can be an extremely dangerous operation if tried at high speed. Needless to say all button fiddling should be done at standstill. The other major operation problems are: the slow acting display with a 0.5 second time delay on the sequence switch operation and the lack of reset accidental protection on the reset button.

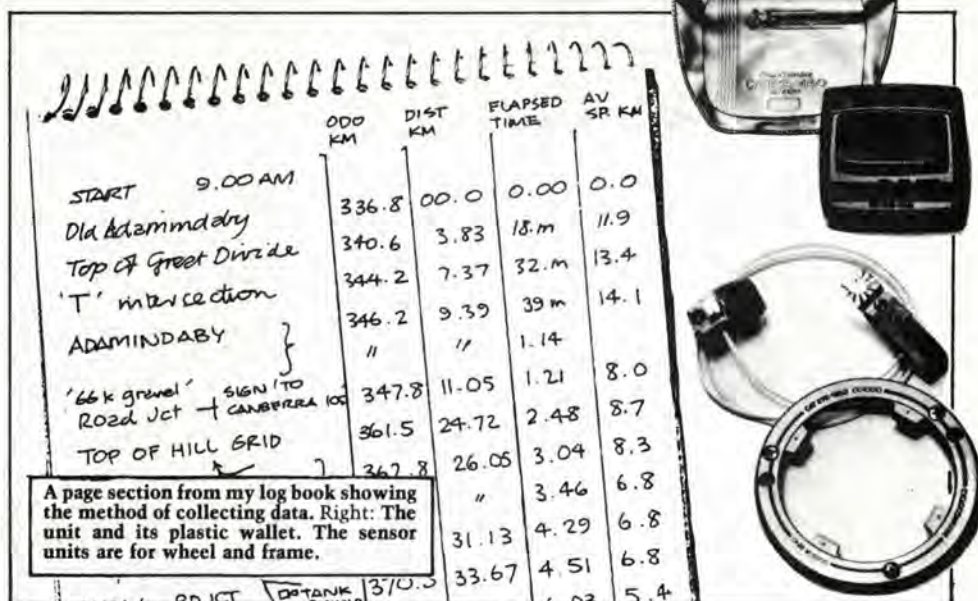
Next to the sequencing function switch there are two other buttons all placed quite close together. It is possible in low light to accidentally miss the sequence switch and press the adjacent reset button. This button should be located on the face of the meter so this problem can not happen. Many a time has valuable stored information been erased during the low light and fumble fingered conditions experienced at the end of a day's riding.

The usefulness of the stop/start switch is questioned too. Initially I would stop the meter during the rest stops but gave this practice away when I would find myself sailing off 5 or so kilometers down the road from the rest stop with the meter still switched off. By leaving the meter running all day the Cat Eye now gives me a daily average speed which includes rest stops rather than the actual travelling average I was seeking. One other kind of electronic meter not yet sold in Australia overcomes this problem by fitting an electronic switch which only calculates average speed when the sensor (wheel) is spinning.

For my needs a daily average is more appropriate. If one has to know the average speed in order to predict the time of arrival at a destination, the real average is not a travelling average but one that includes rest stops, which will be taken along the way.

As such this meter seems more suitable as a tool for cycle touring rather than for road training use. The maximum speed function is pure gimmick as there is no way of knowing when the maximum speed was attained. However racers may disagree with me on this point.

As with pocket calculators, future models of this unit should become more sophisticated and probably cheaper than the current recommended retail price of around \$59.



The multiple switching for variable wheel sizes may be fine but this meter is obviously almost exclusively fitted to 27 inch or 700c wheel models.

The Cat Eye has undergone well over a year's use on my bicycle and operation is now second nature. Sure there are problems but at the moment there is no other unit in its class to compare with its compact design.

If I were designing a new updated model the only feature I would add would be a time of day function with possibly a dual time — distance read-

out (slightly smaller to keep the same read-out space dimensions). The speed bar graph and maximum speed could also be dispensed with.

So where to from here? I have already spotted a 'Made in Singapore' bicycle computer in a local radio supply store that has other gimmicky features. I hope future units don't go overboard with added functions. One thing I certainly don't need is a cyclocomputer that tells me in a metallic voice that I am travelling too slow and that 'I had better get a move on preese!'

Warren Salomon

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PEDLAR

World Bike Ride Update

After Darwin?

In previous issues we have followed the journeys taken by those intrepid peacemakers — members of the World Bike Ride for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament (WOOBORA) across Australia from Melbourne to Darwin and then through parts of Asia.

At present all the Wooboras are gathering in Europe to take their message onto the roads there. In future issues we will continue to present their epic journey.

Oliver Portway was one of the Wooboras who rode to Darwin from the South East. This is his account of the World Bike rides uneasy progress from Darwin to Asia and beyond.

After riding for 6000km through Australia 45 Wooboras rode into Darwin on July 19th a ragged and unkempt looking bunch, but happy and in high spirits after 4 months on the road. But soon after arriving, the problem of 'what next' soon became apparent and many Wooboras obviously felt at a loose end. Murray, Paul, Chris and Alex, the advance party to Japan soon had their tickets bought and were involved in their own preparations. Soon after, the 2nd overseas contingent, planning to go to Singapore then Bangkok enroute to Tokyo, also bought tickets. This began as Sean, Sally and Miranda. Then Dave, caught up in the enthusiasm, also decided to go. I was at a loose end, sitting in a coffee shop that evening with Sean and Murray, saying I had enough money to get there but that was all. It didn't take long for them to convince me to take the chance and come. So the next day I bought my ticket, and at the last minute Meredith also bought a ticket, which made 10 Wooboras heading overseas, spirits were high and everyone was excited. I



With a bamboo grove as a back drop, three Woobora riders enjoy the Japanese spring. Summer (Northern) will find them regrouped in Europe.

decided to make a blitz trip to Adelaide, plug Woobora in on Hiroshima Day, sort out my own affairs and finances and return to Darwin, all in two weeks. I made it with one day to spare. During this time Murray and Paul left, and one week later Chris and Alex also departed, all Tokyo bound.

Paul and Murray arrived in time to attend the world conference against A and H bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August the 6th and 9th. Chris and Alex arrived on the 7th. They got their way into Tokyo. Narita Airport (infamous for its forced building) is 60kms from Tokyo and at first navigation in Japan is very difficult. After roaming for two days they caught the train to Tokyo from the southern suburbs and collected their bikes the next day. A few days later they met up with Paul and Murray. With these four united, planning for Woobora in Japan began.

Meanwhile the second overseas contingent was preparing itself for departure. After farewell parties and much merriment, we left on Friday the 13th, which earned Sal, Meredith and Miranda the title of Woobora witches. We spent a week in Singapore adjusting to the heat and S.E. Asian way of life, and met up with Cathy from N.Z. also travelling the world by bicycle, and the eight of us set off for 100km of riding up the East Coast of Malaysia — 3 weeks of hot, sticky, but pleasurable riding. Unpredictable rain and sleazy Malaysian men hassling the women were our main troubles.

Food and accommodation were both cheap and plentiful. The tour was highlighted by some beautiful jungle riding, monkeys swinging and chattering high in the trees, and some delightful coconut lined beaches.

One bad experience I had at this time was food poisoning near Kota

Bharu. It made me very sick so Meredith and I went ahead to Kota Bharu and I paid a visit to the local hospital. After a long wait I was examined and the doctor decided to keep me in overnight for observation. The ward was like a scene from the Crimean War, no free beds, so I was given a stretcher in the aisle. The rats were the biggest I have ever seen and the cats were suffering from multiple rat bites. I didn't stay long but escaped out of a back door and a 2 metre fence, then off to a private clinic and several days later good health returned.

Time was running on so we decided to catch a train to Bangkok. Here we got Woobora mail from Japan that didn't sound very promising. This was during the early days when the boys were depressed and spending lots of money. Much decision making had to be made.

Dave and Cathy are going to Nepal and India. Sean is going to China, and Sal, Miranda, Meredith and I decided to go on to Japan. By this time, Paul, Murray, Alex and Chris had started riding in Hokaido.

The four of us arrived in Tokyo, and after a couple of days headed up to Aomori, the northern most city in Honshu, to meet the boys on their return from Hokaido. The next day the meeting happened much to their surprise, as they hadn't known that we were coming. Lots of smiles and hugs and happiness and the Woobora spirit was strong. From here seven of us rode south to Tokyo, taking about four weeks. Paul's visa expired and he couldn't get another extension so he had to leave the country, much to his disappointment. Some great riding was done during this time, especially around Nikko.

We were also busy meeting peace groups of many different kinds. Unfortunately, just before Tokyo, Alex's front rack decided to get closer to his wheel, and wrapped itself into the wheel causing some damage to Alex as he was thrown forwards over the handle bars. A broken jaw and loose front teeth, plus bruises and grazes were the damage but Alex is okay now and in Tokyo, broke but working. His front wheel and rack were also written off which presents him with another problem.

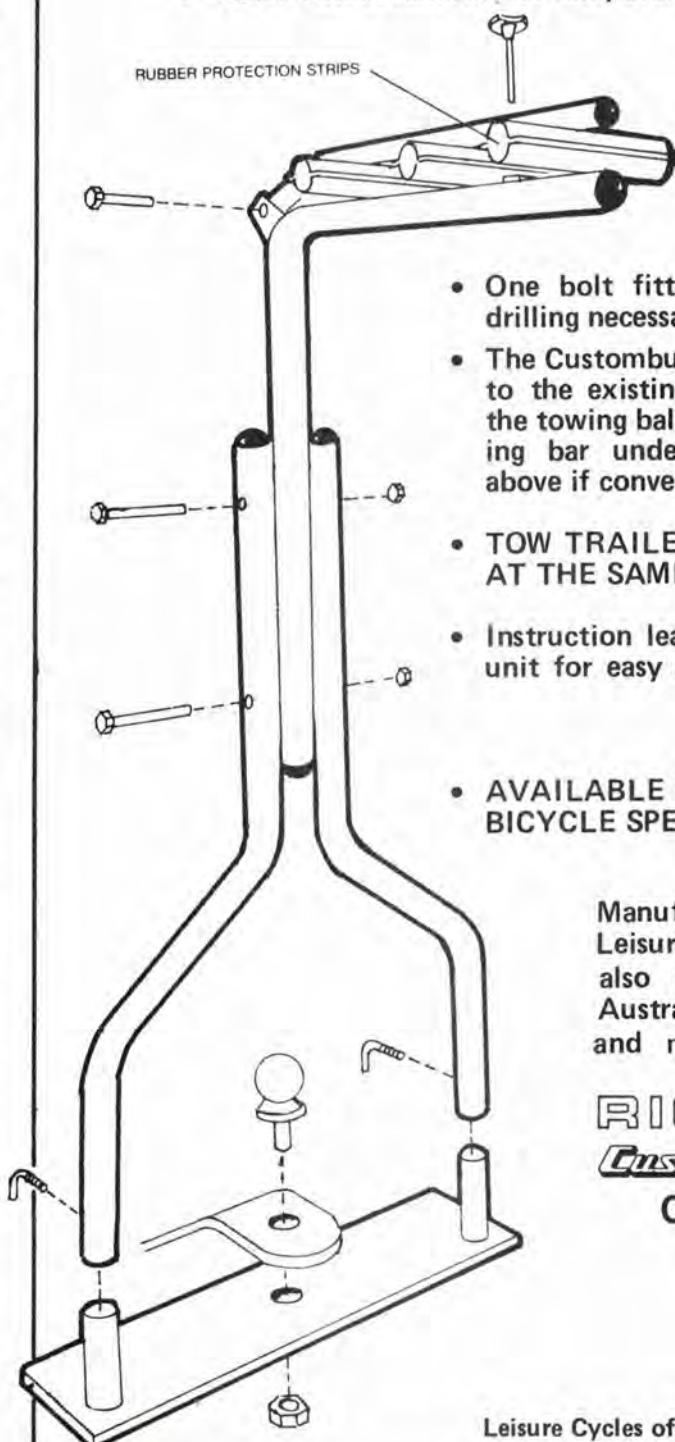
Undeterred, the remaining six of us left Tokyo and are now in Hiroshima, still together many adventures and meetings later. We six are a mixed bunch, equally divided between 3 men and 3 women. Coming from different backgrounds and different parts of Australia we are bound together by the spirit of Woobora, and our concern at the state of the world and the path it is taking to nuclear destruction.

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50 Freewheeling

Freewheeling PRODUCT REVIEW



The Rosebank 'Stackhat'.

A new crash-helmet for cyclists designed and made in Melbourne has just been released onto the market. The aptly-named *Stackhat*, from Dandenong firm Rosebank Products, has passed stringent tests and has been approved by the Standards Association of Australia.

The *Stackhat* comes in a size range from 54 up to 59 centimetres, suitable for most adults and teenagers. The outer shell is made from a tough plastic called PBT, which is lined with air-filled polystyrene foam. This foam compresses on impact and thus reduces the shock to the wearer's head. Between the polystyrene and your head is a layer of soft polyurethane foam. This makes the *Stackhat* very comfortable to wear, although like many close-fitting hot day. Under normal conditions the six large air-vents allow a good flow of wind through your hair. Unlike other helmets, the *Stackhat* not only protects your skull and forehead but also the back of the neck, both temples and to some extent the ears, which are still out in the open for good hearing and boxed in by the helmet's structure. It is held on by a nylon webbing strap under the chin, which keeps the helmet firmly and squarely on the head, even during sudden movements.

The *Stackhat* weighs just over half a kilogram and doesn't feel any heavier on the head than equivalent helmets, because much of this weight is fairly low

down in the structure. The user's vision, straight ahead and around the edges, is almost obstructed by the helmet.

The outer shell is also available in a choice of colours, yellow or white. Both are good visibility colours, and this is the first time any local or imported high-quality helmet has offered a choice to the owner. The use of PBT for the outer layer has an additional advantage in that any kind of sticker, label or reflective tape can be stuck to the exterior of the helmet. Almost all other helmets on the market can have their plastic shells damaged or weakened by the adhesives used.

However, care must be taken in cleaning the *Stackhat* or removing such items, for the liners can be damaged by solvents or cleaning agents. Apart from safety features, a lot of styling has obviously gone into the design, aimed at producing a piece of protective head-gear not only functional but also attractive in appearance. Reactions from kids in the high-school age range, the largest likely group of users, appear to have been mostly favourable so far.

Although the *Stackhat* is mainly intended for cyclists, the manufacturers also claim that it is ideal for a wide range of other sports, including skateboarding, cricket and horse-riding. The helmet is now available from most major city and suburban bicycle shops. The average retail price is within one dollar either way of forty-eight dollars.

Ray Peace

Tandem Talk



With this issue we begin a regular column for two seater enthusiasts by Paul Farren who will bring you news and information on the very sociable world of tandem cycling.

Paul is currently President of the Tandem Club of Australia and the owner of a number of new and vintage two seaters. He is also editor of a very lively newsletter for the TCA.

The Tandem Club of Australia can be contacted by writing to the Secretary TCA, 71 Tivoli Road, South Yarra Vic. 3141. The TCA is not the only tandem club in the country. One of the objects of this column is to foster a growing interest in tandems so future editions will bring readers up to date listings of other clubs both local and perhaps overseas.

Tandemonium

There have been three booms in the history of the tandem bicycle. They were, 1895 — 1910, 1930 — 1940 and 1975 — to the present day. So you didn't know tandems are peaking in popularity, well allow me to introduce you to the companionable world of the 'Twicer' or the 'Double Bike'.

Looked at from the drawing board the tandem has a lot going for it. Spread between two riders its weight is less than two bicycles (even an old tandem). The wind resistance of a tandem is 30 per cent more than a single bicycle. This of course, is considerably less than two bicycles even when one is closely drafting the other. These two features make tandems with two strong riders frighteningly fast. Having ridden a tandem for more years than I care to remember, the essence of the machine is not only its increased

efficiency but also the value which one places on companionship.

If one rides a bicycle regularly then the increased pleasure when riding with another is immediately apparent. The problem with two or more bicycles is that most road conditions are not compatible with side by side riding and a person drafting another is at greater risk in not being able to see road surface conditions ahead. Here lies the beauty of the tandem machine, the person most at risk on a single, on a tandem becomes the person who is able to relax. He or she can stop watching the tarmac or gravel ahead of the front wheel and the joys of the terrain through which they are passing can be studied at leisure.

One does not have to spend all day chatting but both partners are able to communicate at will, either verbally or through the pedals.

In view of their limited production and specialist components tandems are inevitably more expensive than their equivalent in solo bikes. This tends to mean that stable riding relationships are best suited to these machines. Let us not forget to mention that with any two riders one will always be slightly stronger than the other but the tandem evens this out with the overall speed usually approximating the faster rider so both riders feel the benefit from the occasion.

Of course tandems are not without specific problems as well as the benefits mentioned above. This is the first of a series of articles which will discuss the pain and the pleasures of these wonderful machines and hopefully inspire a few more cyclists to take the plunge and join the ranks of the fully converted tandemists as either captain or stoker.

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		27x1 1/4			280
TURBO/S (folding)	High Performance, Racing	27x1	100	106	195
		700x25c			195
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Melbourne Goes Mad

Century rides are extremely popular in the US and Europe and now the idea is becoming established in this country. Already there are the Geelong-Otway (Vic) Century; Green Valley (NSW) Twin Century and CTA-WA 100km Achievement rides. Australians now have a brand new event held this year over a 100km circuit near Melbourne and called the Michelin Autumn Daytour.

The event is sponsored for Michelin tyres by Hanley Trading Pty. Ltd. a bicycle equipment wholesaler and was very well organized by the Melbourne Bicycle Touring Club.

The club's committee put in tremendous work to ensure the rides success. From the response of just over 300 riders their efforts were well rewarded. The day began in gentle Autumn sunshine adjacent to the Hurstbridge railway station. Hurstbridge is a terminus of the Melbourne electric railway system and Vic Rail kindly agreed to run extra carriages on trains throughout the day to cope with MAD riders.

There was to be no mass start and so riders began arriving and departing from the registration desk from 9am onwards. They were warmly greeted by the Michelin man and several pink elephants.

Participants were given a map and sent on their way — not that a map was needed for the route had been excellently signposted by the MBTC crew. The route took riders into the foothills and up onto the Great Dividing Range over roads which were mostly sealed and lightly trafficked. Of the 100 kilometers of route 30k was over gravel road.

Early in the day, riders were rewarded for their climbing ability with a blistering descent into Yarra Glen on a smooth bitumen road down from Christmas Hills.

Once up onto the divide at Kinglake the temperature dropped and the clouds rolled over but the spectacular views of Melbourne from the lunch stop were well worth the mornings pedalling effort.

From lunch at the rides highpoint it should go without saying that the afternoons ride was deliciously downhill. Once onto the Melbourne plains at Whittlesea the temperature rose, and for the riders frequent individual stops were necessary to ad-

Headlights for bikes!

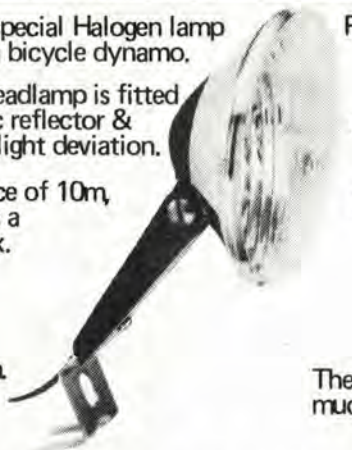
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PEDLAR



Event rides take off

Bicycle touring in Australia received a huge boost this Autumn with the staging of two large scale public event rides, one in Victoria and the other between Sydney and Canberra. *Freewheelings* Warren Salomon went along on both of them, one to ride, the other to cook. Here is his report of these very different events



Bright sunshine and a cheery Michelin man greeted us at Hurstbridge Station at the start of the ride.



Look at this mob posing for the camera. Anyone would think there was a Freewheeling photographer around.



Riders every where! Great company.

just clothing 'layers'. A section of terminal road corrugation near Arthurs Creek shook everything off bikes from battery lights to false teeth but this was to be only one of the many brief episodes in an everchanging route surface.

Some of the speedy types had made it back to the start by lunch while the tail enders arrived shortly before dark. At the rides' end participants were presented with a certificate of entry into The Order of the Tired Tyre and a commemorative cloth patch. The MAD ride was judged a great success and attracted strong support from Melbourne's many touring club members. The event was well publicized in Melbourne through the clubs and shops but organizers promised to give *Freewheeling* longer notice so that our many readers across the country can have the opportunity of going MAD next year.

Young tandemist Sanya Reid Smith and her dad Robert pedalled all the way round on their two seater.



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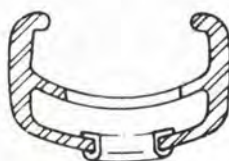
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The 1983 edition of the International Cycling Guide has been published in the UK and copies are on their way to Freewheeling Mail Order. Customers who have pre-ordered this excellent book will receive priority handling when copies of the guide arrive. The '83 edition will be fully reviewed the next issue of *Freewheeling* and copies can be ordered for delivery in July by sending in the order form below.

Don't delay — reserve your copy today. There is no price increase on this years edition. It remains at \$12.50 postage paid.

☐ **YES.** Please send me a copy of the 1983 International Cycling Guide. If I am not completely satisfied I can return it for a full refund. I enclose cheque/money order for \$12.50 (Postage and packing included) Bank Card customers use order form enclosed in magazine.

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TOSH '83

Cooking a steaming hot curry for 50 people can be a satisfying experience when those concerned are hungry bicycle tourers and the venue is a damp misty caravan park in NSW Southern Highlands town of Bundanoon.

Elsewhere it was a damp Easter for holiday makers but for the 40 riders and ten crew of the first Australian Cycle Trails Tour of the Southern Tablelands (TOSH) it was a memorable experience dampened only by heavy rain on the last day.

The ride commenced at Wallacia on the outskirts of Sydney after a catered lunch and a tussle with the railways the night before. Special arrangements had to be made at the start of the ride due to a 'run-in' with the State Rail Authority Bookings computer and an incident at Canberra Station where two bicycles were left off the Sydney bound train.

Tales of atrocities committed to bicycles and cyclists were swapped during the first days riding. This was missed by two Canberra riders and accompanying support crew members who waited at Strathfield for the 'delayed' bicycles. It was not until after dark when all of the TOSH riders were reunited at the idyllic Thirlmere Lakes National Park campsite.



Above: A triumphal but wet entry is made by riders into Canberra at the end of the ride. Below: The TOSH group photo taken on the morning of the final days ride.

The riders themselves were of all ages from 14 to mid fifties and from all walks of life. Most were from the Sydney and Canberra regions but some came from as far away as Melbourne, Wollongong and Newcastle.

Distances covered varied from 60 to 100 kilometres per day over mostly undulating terrain. There were as well a few good hills, thrown in to liven up a days ride. Luckily the rain held off until the last day and the riders claimed credit for the breaking of the drought as epitomised by the ancient saying 'Rain always follows the cycle tourer'. Two weeks previously the hills surrounding Goulburn were dry and bare of ground cover but for TOSH riders it was unimaginable that this landscape had recently been through a severe drought.

Winds for most of the way were favourable. One memorable stretch between Goulburn and Tarago was covered in near perfect conditions with tailwind and cooling temperature all the way.

Mechanical assistance was generously provided by Ian and Fern of Spokesman Cycles a Canberra bike shop. Their job was made easier by the generally good conditions of the riders machines but the inevitable broken spoke did occur and was dealt with in a professional manner from the mobile workshop.

TOSH provided its riders with a catered breakfast and dinner so lunch was usually bought along the way. On entering a lunch town the location of the best cappuccinos and devonshire teas could easily be deduced by the number of bicycles parked outside each cafe.

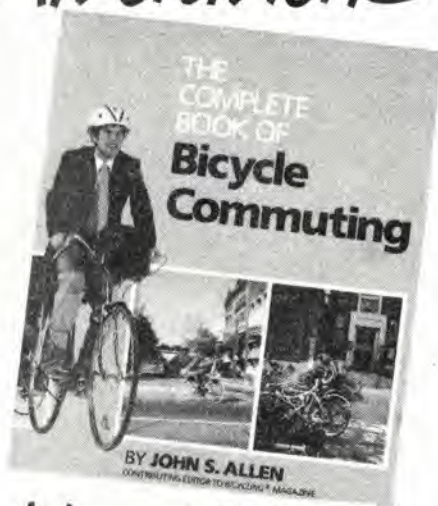
TOSH will be held again next year and as with this years ride a limit will be placed on the number of participants to ensure adequate catering for an event of this type.

Australian Cycle Trails thanks the riders and especially the crew for their hard work and enthusiasm and we can all look forward to next years memorable Easter RASH — thats Ride Across the Southern Tablelands for all of you ACTronym lovers.



Freewheeling MAIL ORDER

June '83 Catalogue Additions & Alterations



New titles

The Complete Book of Bicycle Commuting by John S. Allen

In reviewing the small field of currently available books on bicycle commuting, David Strom writing in the US journal *Bikereport* called this book the most comprehensive and best illustrated book of the five (reviewed).

This book is loaded with practical information that will be helpful to the novice or veteran commuter. Destined to become the standard reference work on this subject the book contains chapters on selecting a bike for commuting, basic riding skills, driver training, on-road communication, carrying loads, riding at night, trip planning, using maps as well as basic repairs.

The on-the-road photographs are taken for a US audience so the Australian reader will need to allow for this when using this valuable reference book.

SPECIAL OFFER JUNE/JULY '83
As a special once only introductory offer the first five mail order

customers to order this book will receive their copy in the hard cover cloth bound edition for the same price as the paperback. The next five customers will receive a free copy of our other smaller bicycle commuting book: Donald Pruden's *Around Town Cycling* with their copy of the *Complete Book of Bicycle Commuting*. Paperback 305 pp illustrated with diagrams and many B+W photographs.



Bicycling in Hawaii by Robert Immler

The islands of Hawaii offer probably the most diversified cycling in the world. In a relatively small area you can visit not only white sand beaches but beaches of black, red or green sand. You can ride to waterfalls over roads covered with ripe fallen fruit.

This guide book describes rides on all six major Hawaiian islands. For each ride it gives road conditions, facilities along the way and features to see.

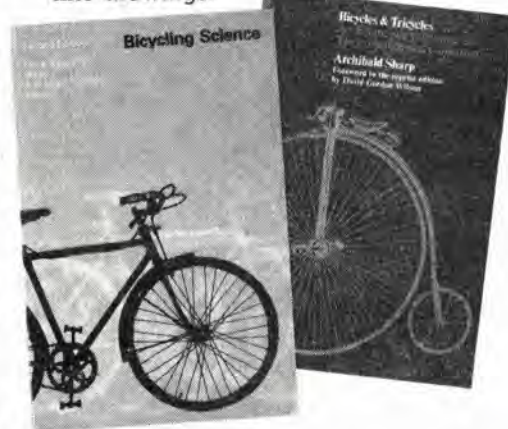
It is an invaluable reference to all wishing to explore the incomparable Hawaiian Islands in a new way. Paperback 135 pp. Illustrated with maps and B+W photographs.



Glenns Complete Bicycle Manual by Clarence W Coles and Harold T Glenn. Crown Publishers.

This big book is a step by step guide for disassembly, assembly adjustment and maintenance of American, European and Japanese built bicycles — hubs, bottom brackets and all. Each task is supported with keyed photographs and detailed drawings depicting what is to be done and how. The book also explains how to accurately fit a bike to your body and how to maintain it to maximum efficiency. The clear and detailed photographs and the wide coverage make this book an excellent manual for the beginner wishing to maintain his or her bike.

348 pp Paperback. Profusely illustrated with B+W photographs and line drawings.



Bicycling Science by Frank Whitt and David Wilson MIT Press

It covers just about everything with a lot of history, pix and diagrams along the way.

This book should be of interest to all mechanically inquisitive cyclists, as well as teachers of elementary mechanics or physiology and to engineers and others working to lessen our dependence on high energy-consuming transport.

247 pp Paperback. Illustrated with numerous B+W photographs, charts and line drawings.

Bicycles and Tricycles by Archibald Sharp MIT Press

This is not just a reprint of a historic technical manual but a living study of the mechanics of the bicycle. In so many areas what was written by Sharp in 1896 still holds true today. Whitt and Wilson in their book make many references to this excellent study. 324 pp Paperback. Illustrated with numerous line drawings and charts.

Freewheeling

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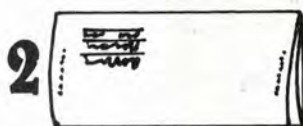
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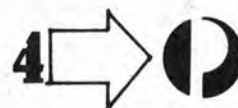
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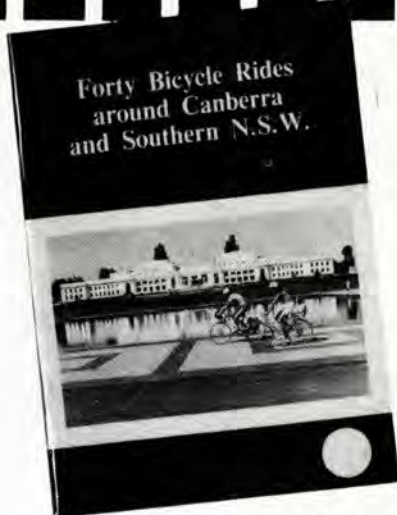


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Forty Bicycle Rides around Canberra and Southern NSW

edited by Bellamy, Carter and Maskell. Pedal Power ACT.

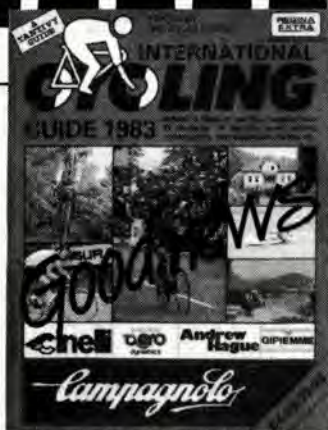
This handy guide proves there's more to Canberra than its cycle paths. The Pedal Power ACT group has drawn from its members' research of many hours and roads of experience to bring all cycle tourists access to this beautiful section of the continent. Rides range from the top of Australia (Mt Kosciuszko) to the coastline of the South Coast. All tours are graded and points of interest are detailed simple maps showing road surface are provided and the guide is excellently illustrated with crisp black and white photographs.

Paperback 64 pp. Illustrated with maps and black + white photographs.



Cycletron

A new game for children 6 — 15 years. This board type game comes complete with cards, dice and bicycle tokens,



The 1983 edition of the International Cycling Guide has been published in the UK and copies are on their way to Freewheeling Mail Order. Customers who have pre-ordered this excellent book will receive priority handling when copies of the guide arrive. The '83 edition will be fully reviewed the next issue of *Freewheeling* and copies can be ordered for delivery in July by sending in the order form.

Don't delay — reserve your copy today. There is no price increase on this year's edition. It remains at \$12.50 postage paid.

and is played on an attractive screen printed washable PVC mat. Cycletron has been specially developed to provide young bike riders with safety education in the form of a game in which the 'roads' take the shape of a BMX bike.

More back issues out of print

We regret that another two issues are no longer available — our print run has sold out. These new collectors items are issues 3 and 10.

Issue three contained the popular guide *Getting Started in Bicycle Touring*. As this was always in demand steps are being taken to publish this helpful guide in an expanded form later in the year.

A small remaining stock of issue 10 has been transferred to the *Freewheeling Touring Service* so that all bike trail packages will be complete. When

stock of this issue expires we will be reprinting the 8 page Pacific Coast Cycle Trail Guide as a separate publication.

Special back issue package 3 — 9 will no longer be available, it will be replaced with sets of available back issues to date and sets of available back issues to issue 15.

Index on the way.

Freewheeling index of issues 1 — 15 is currently being published. Copies of this publication will be available (in July) prior to publication of Issue 21. We regret the delays experienced in production.

In and out of stock

As most of our books come from overseas we always seem to run out of certain titles due to shipping delays and publishers stock availability. *Building Bicycle Wheels* is a good case in point. We always order large stocks of this popular book but as our importer only orders bulk supplies twice a year we are sometimes caught between ships.

We will continue to rely on the back order system as the only means of keeping a wide variety of quality titles available to our customers.

Currently out of stock

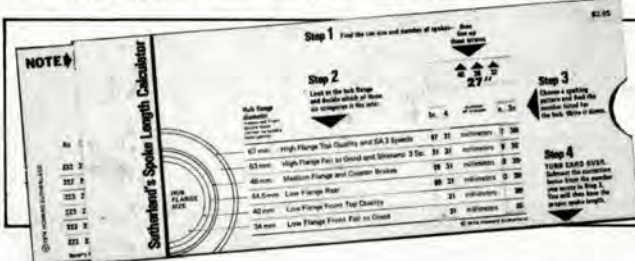
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How to Fix your Bike (Garvey)
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Getting Fit with Bicycling



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Sutherland's Spoke Calculator

Use this slide rule-type calculator to work out spoke lengths for the various cross patterns, rim and hub types. An ideal companion to *Building Bicycle Wheels* B&W print on card, diecut.

One for the Road

Campagnolo is Dead — Long Live Campagnolo

The founder of Campagnolo S.p.A. and one of cycling's greats Tullio Campagnolo passed away earlier this year at the age of 82.

Born in Vicenza, a small town in rural Italy, Campagnolo built up his company in the 1930's with a relentless quest for quality in manufacture.

International recognition came with his patenting of the 'special mechanism' the famous rear derailleur which survives to this day as a hundred Japanese look-alikes.

Tullio Campagnolo throughout his life kept his feet firmly in his home town and such is the extent of his company's fame that the recently completed factory he built dominates the once sleepy rural town.

Campagnolo S.p.A. is now a multinational company selling its bicycle, motorcycle, aeronautic and aerospace products in over 100 countries. Tullio Campagnolo's death

comes at a time when the company, realizing that it well and truly controls the high quality end of the bicycle components market, is moving 'down market' with a new line of less expensive equipment.

The unwillingness of Tullio Campagnolo to compromise quality still lives on and is his legacy to the world's cyclists.

Viscount Liquidates

One of Britain's long established bicycle manufacturing firms Viscount Cycles was put into liquidation earlier this year. The company, famous for its Aerospace series of bicycles popular worldwide during the 1970's, is the latest victim of the continuing world wide shake out in the bicycle industry.

Motobecane Close to the Edge

France's second largest bicycle manufacturer Motobecane (Peugot is No. 1) has applied for corporate restructuring. Industry sources sug-

gest that the French government will rescue the company which reportedly registered a loss of 24.6 million francs (A.\$3.75 million) in the 1981 financial year.

Japan rushed with orders-again

Pressure is being placed on supplies to the relatively small Australian market by increased US demands on Japanese parts and bicycle manufacturers. The US market, sluggish for the latter part of 1982, has picked up and Japan is now awash with orders.

This will have a restricting effect on the availability of some equipment in Australia as traditionally our orders get put aside when the Americans place their huge orders.

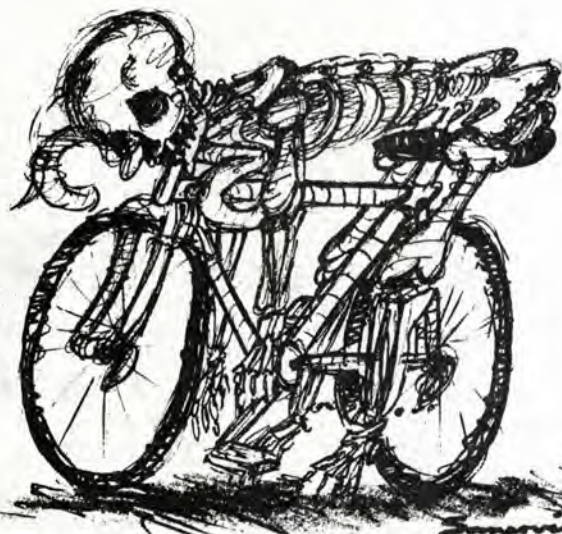
Most Japanese export oriented factories are operating at full capacity and there are no plans to expand production further because of the lack of orders past June. It was in the second half of 1982 that the Japanese experienced a large slump in their export orders to the huge North American market.

Somerville

This issue we welcome as a regular contributor cartoonist and illustrator Phil Somerville. Phil rides a bike so he knows a saddle from a stem — an important thing to know if you are drawing bicycles. Much of his work has appeared in magazines within Australia, his cartoons with bicycle themes have been published in the Bicycle Institute of NSW's journal *Push On*.



NEW GOVT'S BIKE POLICY



OLD GOVT'S BIKE POLICY

Big Ride

This year's New York Five Boro Ride has failed to live up to the popularity of previous years events due to bad weather. The ride last year attracted 17,000 riders in warm fine conditions. The spate of unseasonal poor weather was blamed for this year's disappointing turnout.

Two Wheels — One Life

The State Bicycle Committee and the Victorian Police Force have joined forces to produce a cycling education course in an effort to reduce the number of accidents involving bicycles on Victorian roads.

The course — an audio/visual presentation entitled 'Two Wheels — One Life — A hazard recognition course' was an initiative of the Geelong Bike Plan, but is now available statewide.

The course is produced in kit form comprising two sets of slides, a synchronised audio tape and several brochures. The course covers topics such as: what to wear, hazards to look for when cycling.

The course is suitable for both parents and children. 'Two Wheels — One Life' has been distributed to all Police districts



in Victoria and police in each district have been trained to conduct the course.

The course will be conducted free of charge for parents, schools and community groups.

Those wishing to organise a showing of 'Two Wheels — One Life' should contact their local Police station.

The battle to amend a new Transport Bill in Victoria has special relevance for the Bicycle Institute of N.S.W.

The Bicycle Institute of Victoria (BIV) has been conned by the Victorian Transport Minister Steve Crabb into believing that he was going to do something for cyclists. Meanwhile Mr Crabb is pushing a new Transport Bill through Parliament as this goes to print that will be a disaster for cyclists if it is not amended. The BIV has proposed several amendments to the Minister.

These amendments are designed to protect cyclists interests and give cyclists a say by the establishment of a powerful State Bicycle Committee.

The BIV's Press Release details Crabb's broken election promises, but what can't be said (but is understood by the BIV executive) is even more damning, for example our copy of the Bill fell off the back of a truck, we were not given a copy and asked to comment.

What is happening in Victoria is that all the transport authorities are being reorganised in a major restructuring of the Transport administration, just as happened in N.S.W. under Premier Wran when

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One for the Road

he first came to office. In general terms what the Victorian Government is doing will benefit public transport users, truck drivers and motorists but like the N.S.W. re-organisation it will put the clock back

for cyclists. What is written in the small print in the new Transport Bill, will if not amended before it becomes the 1983 Transport Act, will probably prevent the implementation of the Melbourne Bicycle

Plan, and cyclists having a say in what is done for them.

As it is written the Transport Bill would either wipe out the Victorian State Bicycle Committee or relegate it to some

PRESS RELEASE

Election Promise to Cyclists Broken — The Transport Bill a Disaster for Cyclists: Cyclists Lose their State Bicycle Committee

The 1983 Transport Bill presented to Parliament is a disaster for the 800,000 Victorian pedal cyclists, the majority of whom are children. The wording in many parts of the Act ignores the needs of cyclists, pedestrians and motorcyclists, but the worst defect is that it fails to re-establish the State Bicycle Committee as the means of sensibly managing and directing bicycle planning and implementation in Victoria.

When the new Transport Act becomes law the State Bicycle Committee like Vic Rail will cease to exist. No notice has been given in the Government Gazette for the re-establishment of this committee. Eliminating the only committee that cyclists are represented on and have a say about their safety needs is totally unacceptable to the cycling community, Minister Crabb had promised the Bicycle Institute

that he would not eliminate or downgrade the committee. In his letter dated 10th March, 1982, as Shadow Minister he stated:

'On the basis of the knowledge available to me, there is no intention of changing the status or operation of the State Bicycle Committee.'

As Minister for Transport he reaffirmed his commitment a year ago (May 4th, '82) in a letter to our President Mr. Owen Parnaby:

'You can be assured that the State Bicycle Committee will continue, along with the level of commitment made by the previous administration'

'I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you when the pressure of the administrative change over declines.'

Since putting these reassuring statements on paper Mr. Crabb has refused to consult the Bicycle Institute about cyclists' needs. Never in the six years that the Bicycle Institute has been representing cyclists to government has a Minister ever refused to see us before. Meanwhile the State Bicycle Fund used to finance State Bicycle Committee projects has been scrapped, we obtained a draft copy of the Transport Act that ignores the needs of cyclists, and have received warning from inside sources. We have concluded that our

committee is to be wiped out or put into a fundless, powerless bureaucratic corner.

Under the Liberal Government the State Bicycle Committee worked out what needed to be done to educate cyclists and motorists to enforce bicycle laws and provide facilities for cyclists both off and on the roads. The Committee had its own budget and independent chairman reporting to Minister MacLellan. The State Bicycle Committee is needed to ensure the co-operation of the transport agencies and many other departments such as Education, Police, Youth Sport & Recreation, Planning, M.M.B.W. and it needs to have formal status. The most important future role of the Committee is to co-ordinate all the departments involved in the implementation of the Melbourne Bikeplan (that has just been completed) over the next ten years.

The safety needs of child cyclists should be above party politics. Ministers with their pet hates come and go but this Act is going to be around for a very long time. Consequently we appeal to all members of parliament to ensure that a clause is added to Division 5 of the Act now before Parliament that begins as follows: 'There shall be a State Bicycle Committee.'



TOURLITE HELMET **BELL**

bureaucratic back water without proper funds, power or authority to involve the many government departments that need to be involved. Victoria at best would finish up with a toothless tiger like the N.S.W. Bicycle Advisory Committee, which advises but is rarely listened to.

N.S.W. cyclists should take note because even if the BIV fails to get the amendments it wants, a powerful State Bicycle Committee in N.S.W. still needs to be established under the Minister of Transport or under the Premier.

The Ride of the Century! Coming in October

The Bicycle Institute of New South Wales (BINSW) has decided to organize a mammoth bicycle rally in October. For the first time BINSW will be organizing such an event in conjunction with the Amateur Cycling Union. The aim is to unite all cyclists on this occasion, be their main interests in racing, touring, commuting or recreation, in a show of strength and solidarity that the government and the public will be unable to ignore.

The Institute is planning a rally, for October which, by its sheer size, will aim to put pressure on the government to do

We were wrong

Last issue our three part report entitled *Bicycle Planning Projects bridge the Employment Gap* contained two important misprints. In Alan Parkers piece sub-titled *Why are Bicycle Projects so Poorly Funded?* on page 44 and 45 the figures referred to as 1 and 2 should have been 7 and 8 respectively.

Further on in the article the text wrongly refers to train trips. This should have been TRAM trips and read as follows: Consider the facts: on average, tram trips are about the same length as bicycle trips and the present Victorian Government will be spending \$200 million on tram transport is subsidized-fares for those in need are included. Why then is the BIV having difficulty in persuading the Victorian government to spend more than \$1 million a year on bicycles. For that matter why does the NSW government spend even less on its bicycle projects?



something definite about promoting cyclists' interests. In so doing BINSW is striving to create a media event which will make the public realize just how many bike riders there are and that cyclists' needs must be respected and catered for. For cyclists themselves it will be a consciousness-raising exercise, a realization that all of us have the same interests at heart and need to work together if we are to achieve the aim of creating a safer, saner environment for cyclists.

BELL BIKER HELMET

One for the Road

The idea of organizing a protest rally focusing on the Harbour Bridge and involving a training program similar to the TWS 'No Dams' campaign was mentioned in the previous *Freewheeling*. This was conceived without consultation with the BINSW executive and it has definitely been decided now that such a rally will not take place in October.

With **your** support — the support of each and every cyclist — the Ride of the Century could be a truly unique event in the history of Australian cycling. Should you be interested in helping with the organisation, please contact us on 264 8001 or come in to the Institute Office at 399 Pitt Street, Sydney.

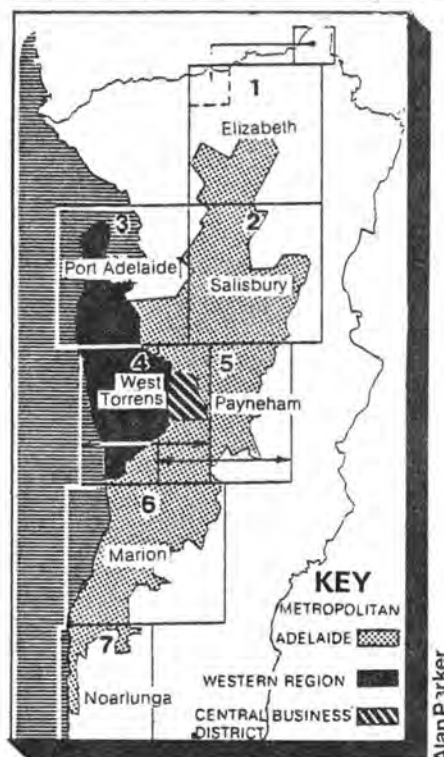
Adelaide Cyclists get their Maps

In a surprising leap forward Adelaide cyclists are to get their bicycle route maps ahead of other capital cities.

The Adelaide bikeplan study has now had its public display and in a special critique of the report in the June/July issue of *National Cycling*, bicycle advocate Alan Parker praised the plan for its provision of a complete set of route maps.

The maps have been produced with support from Life Be In It (SA) and

will go on sale through the government map sales centre. The maps are



printed on waterproof tear-resistant plastic and catalogue existing roads suitable for safe cycling use. As such they are a beginning, and are printed proof of the SA government's commitment to cyclists in that state.

When identifying some of the bikeplans shortcomings Alan said that there is a failure to spell out what government agencies should be doing to ensure a proper implementation of the report. He further suggests that by undertaking physical planning for the western region only the government has wasted funds in adopting this piecemeal approach.

When the physical planning is done for the rest of Adelaide, another survey team will have to go out and do the whole thing again. 'This kind of wasteful duplication of effort usually results from misguided efforts to economise on proper planning' he said.

Copies of the maps are available at a cost of \$2 per sheet from Mapland at the Government Information Office in the Grenfell centre.

Ride Of The Century

Moderates on the Bicycles Institute of NSW's executive have seized the in-

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initiative and have begun planning for a large bicycle rally to be held in Sydney during Spring this year. As reported elsewhere in this issue the rally will involve for the first time the Amateur Cycling Union who are celebrating the centenary of cycle racing this year. The rally will incorporate a bicycle race and fun ride and is expected to attract cyclists from all over the state and inter-state. *Freewheeling* fully supports the concept and will bring readers important information about the event in all future issues. The aim of the rally is to bring to the State Government's attention the urgent need for improve government attitudes and spending in the area of bicycle planning.

A report in the June/July edition of the BINSW journal *Push On* catalogues the haphazard progress made so far by the government. The report entitled *Feedback* suggests that the bicycle planning ship of NSW is still running in circles but at least the crew (State Bicycle Advisory Committee) has turned on the pumps to keep the show afloat.

The BINSW was recently involved in an extraordinary media blow-up when a Manly newspaper reported a list of 'construction deficiencies' (engineering disaster) with the recent-

ly completed Manly-Warringah Bike Path. The (resultant) public outcry provoked a response from Warringah Council which resulted on an on-site inspection involving representatives from the Council, Department of Main Roads, BINSW, Traffic Authority, Manly-Warringah Bike Group and the Ministry of Transport. The more dangerous 'deficiencies' were then examined and solutions were found to eliminate the dangers.

The journal further reports that unfortunately nothing could be done about the alpine gradients along the bikepath.

Bicycle Industry Not United

In a strongly worded letter to the president of the newly formed Bicycle Industry and Traders Association, the secretary of the Retail Cycle Traders Australia, Bill Long has expressed his objections to the 'Manufacturers, Importers, Distributors involvement in to the retail area.'

The RCTA believes that, 'In the main the BITA objectives are weak as most of the issues raised are already established and funded.

The RCTA enjoys an official voice with most Government Departments including Consumer Affairs, Trade Practices Commission, Standards

Association, Police and the Media and therefore quite capable of looking after their own interests that of the Retailers who have direct contact with the buying public.'

The letter is in response to the statement issued by BITA and printed in this column in our last issue.

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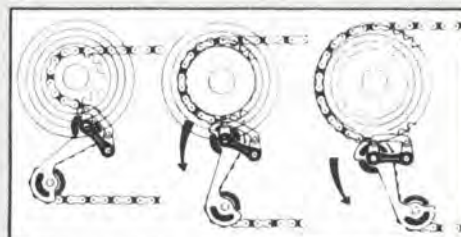
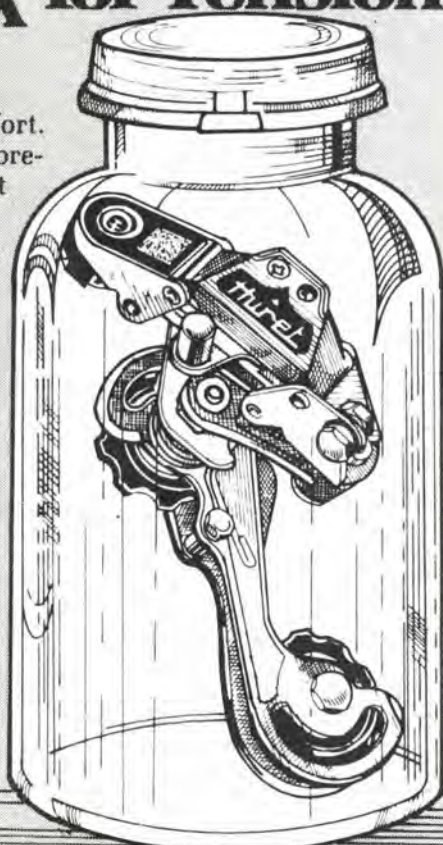


Duopar: Rx for Tension Headache

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Safety First!

Because I am concerned for the welfare of the 1,000 boys in this School, I am writing to you about the cover picture on the April/May 1983 issue of *Freewheeling*.

Freewheeling is a very popular magazine in the Senior School Library and therefore influences the ways in which its readers act. The depiction of two boys riding down the centre of a road, with one blatantly letting the straps of his safety helmet fly loose, indicates a most irresponsible attitude on the part of your magazine.

The photograph looks to have been taken without any thought other than centering the two boys on the road in order to get a better picture. At least the cyclist in the far distance was keeping safely to the left. Obviously the photograph was taken on a country road where there is not the city build-up of traffic which boys must contend with while cycling in this school, but I cannot excuse your shot on these grounds since accidents happen in the country as well as the city.

I think we should all try to remember that 'pictures speak louder than words', especially to today's young people.

Annette Chalmers
Teacher-Librarian
St Peter's College, S.A.

Chain Jumping

Having experienced the phenomenon of a new chain's jumping when used with a worn freewheel, I have dedicated some thought and experiment to the problem over the years. My diagnosis seems to differ somewhat from that of your author, and I propose an alternative account with a brief description of a method for making old freewheels servicable again.

Your author correctly observes that a new chain will 'tend to ride up on the top of the teeth of a worn freewheel. But she/he errs in stating that this is because 'the distance on the sprocket between the tips of each adjoining tooth of the sprocket has been increased by the old chain'. Such wear (towards the tops of the teeth) should create no special problems. The trouble in fact arises because more wear occurs towards the base of the teeth. (see fig. 1)

A worn chain is a stretched one. The distance between links is increased slightly, and such a chain will promote tooth wear through failure to spread the load over several teeth.

The underlying cause of transmission jump can be appreciated by considering the manner in which the chain feeds onto a rotating sprocket at the

bottom of the freewheel. Because its links are spaced at precisely the correct distance (being that which separates the corresponding parts of successive teeth on a sprocket), a new chain under peddling tension will not feed smoothly onto a sprocket which has developed what we might call 'tooth overhand'. Its links will not always be able to slip past the (relatively) raised top inside edges of worn teeth in order to reach the wear-recessed load-bearing surface. (see fig.2) So it rides up on the outside edge of a tooth until that tooth approaches the top of the freewheel. Then the offending link will finally drop into place by suddenly advancing and establishing a new meshing pattern by skipping one freewheel tooth. Hence the very pronounced jump.

Freewheels are repairable items. Their sprockets, for example, can be individually removed. Usually the two smallest sprockets of a cluster freewheel simply screw on to the main body. The larger sprockets are usually splined, and they and their spacers slide off easily once the threaded ones are removed.

Such removal can often be facilitated by holding the freewheel in a vice by means of an old chain wrapped over the largest sprocket whilst unscrewing the threaded sprockets in turn using hammer blows against individual teeth via a piece of hardwood positioned suitably between hammer and tooth.

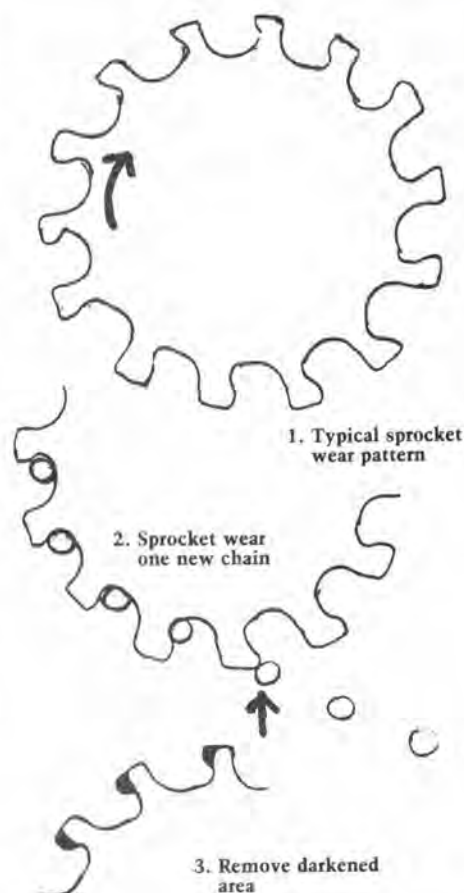
Once removed, offending sprockets can be filed or machined so that the top section of each tooth is better aligned with its worn load-bearing surface. (see fig. 3) That the tops of the teeth lose material, making the gaps between them wider, is of no consequence.

Teeth should be like the shape of waves in deep water rather than the shape of crashing waves in shallow water.

I should also point out that this 'tooth overhand' is such a crucial factor that wear need not be visible to the unaided eye for transmission jump to occur with a new chain. In my experience it is better to be sure and remove a bit too much metal from the problem area than not enough.

I hope that these ideas might somehow be of use to someone — particularly those, who like myself, cannot always afford to buy a new freewheel.

John A. Henderson



NEXT

The Fat Tyre Fanatic test rides the Malvern Star Bushranger mountain bike.

Inside Japan. The Japanese make most of our bikes but these are quite different to the bicycles used in Japan.

Touring the Great Ocean Road.

We continue our series on bicycle gearing with a look at rear derailleurs.

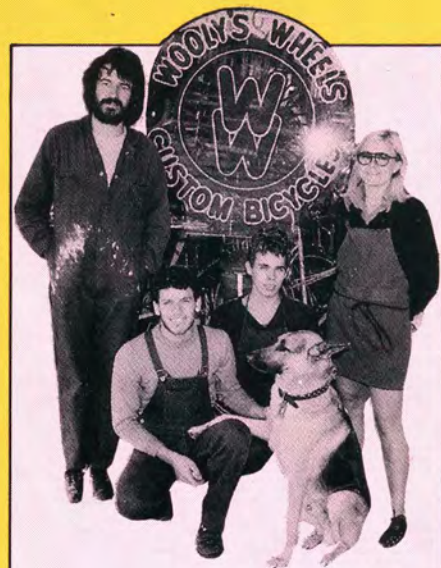
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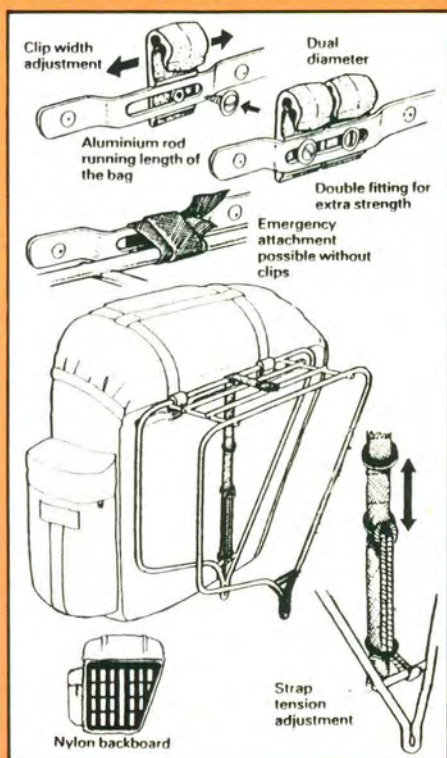
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